THE PRINCESS AND THE SWINEHERD

GWENDOLEN SEILER

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THE PRINCESS AND THE SWINEHERD

A COMEDY FOR YOUNG AND OLD
IN THREE ACTS

By GWENDOLEN SEILER

LYRICS AND INCIDENTAL MUSIC
BY CONRAD SEILER

ILLUSTRATED
BY W. E. LEFFERTS

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PEOPLE IN THE PLAY

King Bingo	The First Sentry
Queen Caroline	The Second Sentry
Princess Potentilla	The Musician
The Swineherd	The Town Crier
Prince Florizel	The Messenger
Prince Pipkin	The First Courtier
Prince Pumpkin	The Second Courtier
The Lord Chamberlain	The Royal Auditors
Jeams	Jane
Hodgson	The First Court Lady
Sir John Hithard	The Second Court Lady

Courtiers, Court Ladies, and Shepherds

DESCRIPTION OF CHARACTERS

KING BINGO is rather fat. He has gray, straggly hair and a mild, kind face. He finds being a King very irksome; he would much prefer being a circus clown or something really proper. He is seldom dignified, but whenever he tries to be, he overdoes it. He likes to slop about in a dressing gown, and the poor Queen has the greatest difficulty getting him washed and dressed for any court function. When we first see KING BINGO, we realize that QUEEN CAROLINE must have an awful time of it. His Majesty's royal cloak has a tear in it as well as several big patches, and, besides, he has it on crooked. Instead of hanging gracefully from his shoulders, as it would on any respectable King, the cloak is worn diagonally across the back, over the right shoulder, and under the left arm, so that it drags on the floor, endangering the life of anybody who may happen to be near. His royal waistcoat is unbuttoned—indeed, there are no buttons to be seen at all! —revealing a crumpled shirt. His lovely satin breeches are undone at the knee, and, in spite of all the Queen's entreaties, he always *will* wear his bedroom slippers. When the royal crown is not on his arm, he is in the habit of wearing it on one side of his head. Disgraceful? Rather!

QUEEN CAROLINE is a chubby little person, a bit stupid perhaps, but that doesn't matter. She prides herself on

being a good housekeeper, and is continually bustling about, setting things in order. Unlike her royal husband, she dresses very neatly—that is, whenever she can find the time to devote to herself.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA is just as pretty as she can be—even prettier, because she is a real Princess. Her hair is as golden as the little wild flower after which she was named. We do hate to say it, but perhaps she *is* a trifle spoiled. She has always had her own way, and if any one crosses her—it doesn't make any difference who it is—she is apt to kick and scream. Of course, she always dresses in white, and her hair hangs down in two long braids.

It is difficult to describe just how handsome the SWINEHERD is. You will have to shut your eyes and think of the handsomest young man you ever saw, and then you must try to imagine some one a million times handsomer still. He always says the correct thing—or, almost always—and his manners are ideal. In fact, he is so altogether perfect that rude little boys might be tempted to poke him to find out if he is real.

PRINCE FLORIZEL is a dashing young man with blond hair and a pointed, turned-up mustache. He is very proud of his courtly manners, and he bows so much that it makes you quite confused to watch him.

PRINCE PIPKIN and PRINCE PUMPKIN are as alike as two peas—and not very good ones, at that. Although they are not related in any way, both their faces are round and red, and it doesn't look as if either of them ever brushes his hair. They are much too fat, too.

THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN is a very important and very

pompous person. He is tall and wears a long, white beard, among other things. He can look very mean, but perhaps Lord Chamberlains have to look mean.

JEAMS is tall also, and not very young. He speaks perfect English when addressing KING BINGO or QUEEN CAROLINE, but when speaking to some one of his own rank or beneath it, he forgets all his nice court diction and uses instead the rather inelegant speech of his boyhood. PRINCESS POTENTILLA is the only member of the Royal Family with whom he feels at ease, and so he always forgets to be elegant with her.

HODGSON, the Head Gardener, is an old man with grizzled hair and beard. He is slow-witted, and looks it.

SIR JOHN HITHARD, a fierce-looking individual with many black whiskers, wears a dressing gown over his gymnasium suit. His muscles are terribly big, and he goes about in tennis shoes.

The FIRST and SECOND SENTRIES look just like two wooden soldiers out of Noah's Ark.

The MUSICIAN is a seedy person with a bald head surrounded by a few strands of reddish hair. He probably can play some instrument, but he certainly doesn't look fit for anything else.

The TOWN CRIER, a trembling old man with gray hair, is knock-kneed and stupid. He is never happy unless he is shouting and ringing his bell. Why he should be the TOWN CRIER is really more than any one can tell.

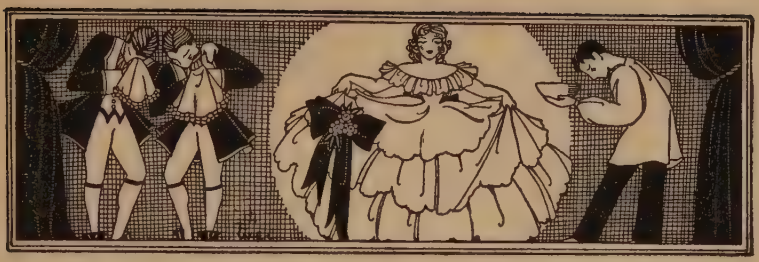
The FIRST and SECOND COURTIERS are very grand. One has blond hair and a curly mustache and imperial, and the other black. They wear feathers in their hats.

The ROYAL AUDITORS—two of them—are dressed just alike and are quite musical. All their movements are made together.

JANE is a very obliging little maid.

The FIRST and SECOND COURT LADIES are frightfully haughty, and as stiff as their starched petticoats.*

* Detailed descriptions of costumes will be found among the Notes for the Producer, at the end of this volume.



ACT I

This is the throne room in KING BINGO'S *Palace—and what an awful-looking room it is for a king to have! But it's the best he can afford; his subjects simply won't pay their taxes. And although the penalty is death, he can't behead them all, as he might need them some time—when he has a war, for instance. So here we find him in a shabbily furnished room. There is an archway in the center of the back wall, and through it we can see the Royal Gardens. Above the archway is a cuckoo clock. At the left, a door leads to the dining room. There is a strip of red carpet leading from this door to the three thrones, which are on a dais at the right. These thrones remind one of the story of the Three Bears, for they are graduated as to size: A large one for* KING BINGO, *a medium-sized one for* QUEEN CAROLINE, *and a darling little one for* PRINCESS POTENTILLA. *Curtains hang on either side of the archway, and on each of them, in large gold letters, is the monogram "B. R." "B. R." stands for "Bingo Rex."*

It is tea time. As the curtain rises, the FIRST *and* SECOND SENTRIES *are discovered standing stiff and immovable on either side of the archway. After a moment's pause, they*

speak, but do not move. They stare straight in front of them like wooden soldiers.

First Sentry: I say, my foot's gone to sleep.
Second Sentry: So's mine.
First Sentry: I wonder what time it is.
Second Sentry: I dunno. What's wrong with the clock?
First Sentry: It must have stopped. I haven't heard it.
Second Sentry: I haven't, either.
First Sentry [*after a pause*]: We were told to be here by two-thirty, ready for the Grand Reception.
Second Sentry: Nothing's ever on time in this place. We must have been here for hours.
[*The cuckoo clock above the archway strikes four.*]
First Sentry: Four o'clock! We've been here for an hour and a half.
Second Sentry: And we aren't through yet! Just suppose it was four to-morrow morning!
First Sentry: My stars, what an awful idea! [*With relief*] It isn't, though. I can feel the sun on my back.
Second Sentry [*after another pause*]: Listen!
First Sentry: What is it?
Second Sentry: I'm going to move.
First Sentry: No, don't! Suppose some one saw you!
Second Sentry: I don't care. I've just *got* to. If I don't bend my legs now, I'll never be able to bend them again.
First Sentry: Don't! You'll have your head chopped off!
Second Sentry: No one's looking.
First Sentry: You can't tell.
Second Sentry: Of course I can. Come on, let's move

together. Don't be afraid. Right leg first. One, two, three—

[*Both Sentries raise one knee so that the upper part of the leg is at right angles to their body. At the same time their arms shoot out sideways on a level with their shoulders; then back again to their original position. The left leg then goes through the same movement as the right. But in the middle of this, just as the Sentries have their knees up and their arms out, who should come in and stand at the door to the left but* QUEEN CAROLINE *herself! She wears a big apron over her court dress and a dusting cap over her elaborately dressed hair. She carries a feather duster in her hand. For a moment she remains at the door looking at the Sentries; then she goes toward them very fussily.*]

QUEEN CAROLINE: What on earth are you doing?

FIRST *and* SECOND SENTRIES [*terribly frightened; together*]: The Queen!

FIRST SENTRY [*stammering*]: Er—er—we were just practicing the new salute for Your Majesty.

QUEEN CAROLINE [*pleased*]: The new salute! It is very nice. You must show it to the King.

SECOND SENTRY [*trembling with fear*]: Oh, no, please, Your Majesty!

QUEEN CAROLINE: Why not?

FIRST SENTRY: We invented it just for you.

QUEEN CAROLINE: Just for me! Well, that's very obliging of you. It shall be known as the Queen's Salute.

FIRST *and* SECOND SENTRIES [*together*]: Thank you, Your Majesty.

QUEEN CAROLINE: Now I must get on with my dusting. The guests are expected at any moment, and the Palace is in such a mess! [*She goes over to the thrones and plumps up the pillows. A cloud of dust comes out of them. Then she dusts around the thrones with her feather duster. As she is thus employed, the Sentries whisper together.*]

FIRST SENTRY: My stars, what an escape!

SECOND SENTRY: Wasn't it, though!

[QUEEN CAROLINE, *having finished dusting the thrones, goes to the Sentries and dusts them. They both sneeze.*]

[PRINCESS POTENTILLA *puts her head in at the doorway to the left.*]

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Mother! Mother! Do come and hook up my dress. Jane does it all wrong.

QUEEN CAROLINE: All right, dear. I'll come at once. Oh, dear, dear, dear! The servants are useless! I have to do everything. [*She goes out at the left.*]

FIRST SENTRY [*standing stiff and immovable again*]: I say, how are we going to get out of doing the Queen's Salute?

SECOND SENTRY: I dunno. If the King sees it, we're dead men.

FIRST SENTRY: Sh-h! Attention! Here he comes!

KING BINGO [*entering through the archway*]: Bless my soul! This crown is frightfully heavy! [*He removes the crown from his head and, slipping his arm through it, wears it like a bracelet; he then mops his brow with a large bandanna handkerchief.*] I'll have to get my next

season's crown from another store. [*To the* First Sentry] Hi, you!

First Sentry [*stepping forward*]: May it please Your Majesty—

King Bingo: But it doesn't please me! It's too heavy. Call the Lord Chamberlain.

First Sentry [*shouting*]: Lord Chamberlain! Forward, please!

[*As the* First Sentry *steps back into his former position, the* Lord Chamberlain *enters through the archway.*]

Lord Chamberlain [*bowing*]: May it please Your Majesty—

King Bingo: I've already told that idiot over there that it doesn't please me! If anybody says that to me again, I'll have his head chopped off!

Lord Chamberlain [*bowing again*]: I crave your pardon, Your Majesty, but if Your Majesty will be so kind as to inform Your Majesty's humble—

King Bingo: If you can't speak without saying "Your Majesty" every second word, I'll hit you on the head with my scepter!

Lord Chamberlain: Yes, Your Majesty—

[King Bingo *promptly knocks off the* Chamberlain's *coronet with his scepter.*]

King Bingo: I told you I would! Now tell me, at which store do you buy my crowns?

Lord Chamberlain: At the Army and Navy Store, Your Maj— [King Bingo *threatens him with his scepter.*] I didn't say it! I didn't say it, Your—

KING BINGO: No, and you'd better not. Now understand me, I won't have any more crowns from the Army and Navy Store. They're too heavy, much too heavy. They make my head ache. Why, this dreadful thing weighs at least a ton. Next time try the City Cork Hat Company.

LORD CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, Your—Old Sport!

KING BINGO: How dare you! What do you mean by calling me "Old Sport"?

LORD CHAMBERLAIN: Well, what am I to call you?

KING BINGO: Call me—let me see—"King." It's shorter. Stop—you'd better say "O King." It sounds more respectful than plain "King."

LORD CHAMBERLAIN: But not nearly so descriptive—O King!

KING BINGO: I don't understand you, but I suppose you're trying to be funny. Kindly summon the Queen. I wish to speak to her.

LORD CHAMBERLAIN [*bowing*]: Certainly, O King. [*He goes to the door at the left and bawls:*] Queen! Queen! The King wants you! Hurry up!

KING BINGO: Be a little more respectful, please. You're not calling a taxi.

LORD CHAMBERLAIN [*bawling anew*]: O Queen! O Queen! The King wants you! Hurry up!

[QUEEN CAROLINE *enters at the left. She is still wearing her apron and dusting cap. In one hand she carries her feather duster and in the other a scepter. She immediately begins to dust again.*]

QUEEN CAROLINE: Did you want me, my dear?

KING BINGO [*indignantly*]: Why aren't you dressed? For goodness' sake, Caroline, take off that cap and apron! It makes you look so common.

QUEEN CAROLINE: Presently, my dear, presently.

KING BINGO: Couldn't the new housemaid do the dusting for you?

QUEEN CAROLINE: She might, my dear, but I never trust a new servant.

KING BINGO: Well, do be quick about it. [PRINCESS POTENTILLA *enters at the left.*] Ah, here comes Tilly! Well, my dear daughter, I hope this will be a very great and happy day for you.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: I hope so, Father, but it's really a little difficult to choose a husband from among three Princes I've never even seen.

KING BINGO: Now then, Tilly, I must insist that you behave yourself. You ought to be very grateful that three perfectly respectable Princes *want* to marry you. You treated the last batch very badly, very badly indeed.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: But they were all so ugly, Papa.

QUEEN CAROLINE: I'm afraid it's no use, Bingo dear. Tilly's an obstinate child. She takes after her royal father. She will have her own way.

KING BINGO: She'll do as she's told!

QUEEN CAROLINE: Well, I hope these Princes are going to be a good-looking trio. I must say I felt for poor Tilly the last time. . . . There, the dusting is all done. I'll just pop the duster under one of the throne cushions, and then we are ready.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Oh, Mother, you shouldn't do the dusting yourself! You know real Queens never do that kind of thing.

QUEEN CAROLINE: *This* Queen does, my dear, and that's all there is to it.

[*The* MESSENGER *enters hastily through the archway.*]

MESSENGER: If you please, Your Majesty, the young Princes are just coming up the street in the Royal Motorbus! They bring a large retinue!

QUEEN CAROLINE: Mercy! I hope there's enough food in the house.

KING BINGO [*to the* MESSENGER]: Go and see that all is in readiness, and ask the Court to assemble.

[*The* MESSENGER *bows and goes out.*]

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Father! Father!

KING BINGO: What is it, Tilly?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: You haven't got your crown on! And I can hear the Court people coming now!

KING BINGO: Gracious, you're right! Now where did I put the wretched thing? Help me look for it, somebody—quick!

[*They all search distractedly about the room.*]

QUEEN CAROLINE [*abruptly*]: Bingo, look! It's on your arm! How many times have I told you not to do that! But it does no good. You *will* behave disgracefully. You'll forget one day and appear before your subjects with your crown on your arm instead of on your head!

[KING BINGO *adjusts the crown on his head, over one eye.* QUEEN CAROLINE *straightens it for him.*]

KING BINGO: All right, all right, Caroline. I can't argue

with you now. But I'll try to remember. [*Looking at her*] Goodness gracious, what about yourself!

QUEEN CAROLINE: What about myself?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Mother, you've still got your cap and apron on!

QUEEN CAROLINE: Did you ever! Tilly, quick, help me!

[*The cap and apron are soon removed and thrown under the throne cushions.*

[*Laughter is heard outside.*]

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: They're coming, Mother! They're coming!

QUEEN CAROLINE: Of course they are, my child. Now don't get excited. [*She sits on her throne beside her daughter; to* KING BINGO] Come up on your throne, Bingo, and for goodness' sake, try to look dignified!

[*A crowd of courtiers and ladies of the Court enter through the archway, talking and laughing.*]

KING BINGO [*rising and holding up his head; trying to be dignified*]: Hush, my friendly, happy, but most noisy subjects! Hush! [*More talking and laughter; to the* LORD CHAMBERLAIN] You tell them.

LORD CHAMBERLAIN [*bawling at the top of his voice*]: Shut UP!

[*There is sudden silence.*]

KING BINGO: H'm! As I was about to say, you are well aware that to-day marks a great event in our lives—

QUEEN CAROLINE: *Royal* lives, my dear.

KING BINGO: Royal lives. The Princess Potentilla—

QUEEN CAROLINE [*interrupting again*]: Bow, Tilly, bow!

KING BINGO: The Princess Potentilla is to choose a hus-

band from among the three valiant Princes, who are even now approaching the Royal Palace in the Royal Motorbus. [*The sound of a trumpet is heard.*] Remember my instructions. As soon as we have greeted the visitors—

QUEEN CAROLINE: *Royal* visitors, my dear.

KING BINGO: Royal visitors—royal visitors— Let me see, what comes next?

QUEEN CAROLINE: Let all the Court—

KING BINGO: Oh, yes! Let all the Court dance before the Royal Throne and render homage to our Royal Persons. Is that perfectly clear?

ALL: Yes, Your Majesty!

KING BINGO: Then mind you do it properly. If any one makes a mistake, off with his head! Caroline, my dear wife, pray be seated. Tilly, sit down.

[*The* MESSENGER *rushes in again.*]

MESSENGER: Your Majesty!

KING BINGO: Now what?

MESSENGER: The Royal Motorbus is entering the drive!

KING BINGO: I hope they won't knock the Royal Gatepost down!

MESSENGER: I will see, Your Majesty. [*He goes out.*]

LORD CHAMBERLAIN: Shall I give the order for the musicians, O King?

KING BINGO: No, I'll do it myself. You're sure to do it wrong. [*He crosses to the door at the left.*]

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Mother, I'm feeling so nervous!

QUEEN CAROLINE: There, there, my dear.

KING BINGO [*shouting through the doorway*]: Ho, without! Strike up, ye bold musicians! [*Dead silence*] Play music! Strike up! [*More silence*] Bother those fellows!

What's the use of being a King if, when you yell, "Strike up, ye bold musicians!" they don't.

QUEEN CAROLINE: Don't what, my love?

KING BINGO: Don't strike up, of course.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: I think they have struck, Father.

KING BINGO: Tilly, be quiet! [*Shouting*] Jeams! Where is Jeams?

[JEAMS, *the butler, steps out from the crowd.*]

JEAMS [*bowing*]: Here, Sire, at your service.

KING BINGO: Fetch me the Master Musician.

JEAMS: Yes, Sire.

[*He goes out at the left.*]

KING BINGO: I'll show him who's master here!

QUEEN CAROLINE: Now, dear, don't be violent. You know it's not good for you. Perhaps the poor man is ill.

KING BINGO: If he isn't now, he will be!

[*The* MUSICIAN *enters at the left with* JEAMS.]

KING BINGO: Ha! Come here, sirrah! What does this mean? Where is your trumpet?

MUSICIAN: If it please Your Majesty—the driver of the Royal Motorbus borrowed it because his motor horn had gone wrong. May it please Your Majesty—

KING BINGO: Why in the world should you think it would please me? Haven't you got another?

MUSICIAN: No, Your Majesty, it was the only one in the Kingdom.

KING BINGO: Idiot! What did you lend it for, then? Well, you'd better flourish on something else.

MUSICIAN [*eagerly*]: Yes, Your Majesty! I can get a very pleasing effect with one finger on the piano. Shall I try?

KING BINGO: Well, all right, but be quick about it. [*The*

MUSICIAN *goes out left.*] 'Pon my soul, nothing gets done in this place unless I do it myself!

[*A one-finger flourish on a piano is heard. The crowd stands at attention. Through the archway at the back enter* PRINCE FLORIZEL, PRINCE PIPKIN, *and* PRINCE PUMPKIN *with their retinues. The three Princes carry enormous calling-cards under their arms.*]

KING BINGO: Welcome to my Kingdom!

QUEEN CAROLINE: Welcome!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA [*embarrassed*]: Welcome!

QUEEN CAROLINE: Bow, Tilly!

LORD CHAMBERLAIN [*shouting again*]: WELCOME!

ALL: Welcome!

[*The three Princes bow in their turn and hand their calling-cards to the* LORD CHAMBERLAIN, *who gives them to* KING BINGO.]

KING BINGO: Caroline, let me present you: Prince Florizel, Royal Heir to the Kingdom of Almira and three thousand five hundred pounds—

PRINCE FLORIZEL [*bowing low over* QUEEN CAROLINE'S *hand*]: Ten shillings and sixpence, Your Majesty.

QUEEN CAROLINE: How de do! I hope you're not tired after your journey—such a long way, you know. . . . Jeams, three chairs, please.

[JEAMS *places the chairs near the thrones.*]

KING BINGO: And this is Prince Pipkin, Royal Heir to the Kingdom of Hyperion, including fifty pigs, thirty-nine cows, and four milkmaids.

QUEEN CAROLINE: How de do!

[PRINCE PIPKIN *bows.*]

KING BINGO: And last but not least, we have Prince Pumpkin, who is Royal Heir to three hundred acres of waste land and his father's second-best castle.

[PRINCE PUMPKIN *bows.*]

QUEEN CAROLINE: Gentlemen, this is the Princess Potentilla.

THE THREE PRINCES [*bowing together*]: Charmed, I'm sure!

QUEEN CAROLINE [*in a loud whisper*]: Bow, Tilly! [*To the Princes*] Be seated, gentlemen!

KING BINGO: H'm! Now, as you've been introduced, let's get down to business.

QUEEN CAROLINE: *Proceed*, my dear.

KING BINGO: What?

QUEEN CAROLINE: *Proceed.*

KING BINGO: Oh, yes! Let us proceed to business. I think we all are aware of the object of your visit—at least, we can guess what three handsome young men would be visiting us for. It is, if I mistake not, to crave the hand in marriage of my daughter the Princess Potentilla. Well, you have my permission to pay your addresses to her, and may the best man win! [*Cheers from the crowd*] Now, ladies and gentlemen, to celebrate this happy event, I want you to dance before the Royal Princes. Are you ready? Go!

[*The music starts, and all the Court people take up their positions for the Minuet. The Princes sit enthralled; and when the dance is over, applaud loudly.*]

PRINCE FLORIZEL [*rising*]: As the eldest and wisest of the three suitors for the hand of the Princess, I, Prince

Florizel, claim my right to be the first to try to win the Princess' favor.

KING BINGO: It's all the same to me. But how are you going to set about it, my lad?

PRINCE FLORIZEL: I shall win her by my skill and strength at boxing. [*To the crowd*] I hereby challenge any one in this court to two rounds with the gloves!

[*As he speaks,* SIR JOHN HITHARD *enters through the archway. He wears his dressing gown over his gymnasium suit.*]

KING BINGO: Great!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA [*clapping her hands*]: Oh, that will be fun! Mother, I like him already!

QUEEN CAROLINE: Wait, my child, wait.

SIR JOHN HITHARD [*stepping forward*]: May I take up the challenge, Your Majesty? I'd like to sock him one.

KING BINGO: By all means, if it amuses you. Jeams! Oh, Jeams! Two pairs of gloves instantly! [JEAMS *rushes off left.*] Prince Florizel, permit me: This is Sir John Hithard, my Royal Boxer. He has the fiercest temper and strongest muscles in the Kingdom. Show him, Sir John. [*As* SIR JOHN HITHARD *is displaying his muscles to* PRINCE FLORIZEL, JEAMS *comes back with the gloves.*] Ah, here are the gloves! Thank you, Jeams. [*To* PRINCE FLORIZEL] Now, young man, put them on, and if you beat my famous boxer, Sir John Hithard, you shall certainly have my daughter as a reward. . . . Are you ready? Box!

[*A tremendous bout follows, during which both* SIR JOHN *and* PRINCE FLORIZEL *are roundly pommeled.*]

KING BINGO [*looking at his watch*]: Stop! Stop!

[*Amid cheers from the crowd, the two fighters sit down and are fanned by* JEAMS *and the* LORD CHAMBERLAIN.]

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Mother, Mother! Isn't this just too exciting!

QUEEN CAROLINE: Sh-h, my dear! They are going to begin again.

KING BINGO: All right! [SIR JOHN *and* PRINCE FLORIZEL *rise and face each other again.*] One to make ready! Two to be steady! Three to—go!

[*The fight is on again.* PRINCE FLORIZEL *is suddenly knocked down.* KING BINGO *leaves his throne and stands over the Prince.*]

KING BINGO: One—two—three—four—five—six—seven eight—nine—[*Pause;* PRINCE FLORIZEL *does not get up.*] TEN!

[*The crowd cheers;* KING BINGO *returns to his throne.* SIR JOHN *struts about, very much satisfied with himself.*]

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Oh, Mother, I don't know whether I'm pleased or not! I think I rather liked him.

QUEEN CAROLINE: Well, my dear, since you can't make up your mind yourself your father's going to do it for you. Prince Florizel will be sent packing and you'll see no more of him. [PRINCE FLORIZEL, *supported by two of his retinue, goes out through the archway.*] Now it remains to be seen what the others will do.

PRINCE PIPKIN [*to* KING BINGO]: Your Majesty, Prince Pumpkin and I prefer to fight with some one of royal blood. [SIR JOHN HITHARD *looks his fiercest.*] We will

fight each other, if it please you, and the winner shall marry the Princess.

KING BINGO: Very well. Go ahead.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Mother, I don't want to marry either of those two.

QUEEN CAROLINE: It will be one or the other, my child; you may depend upon it. You've had your own way long enough.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: I won't marry the ugly things, so there!

[*During this time,* PRINCES PIPKIN *and* PUMPKIN *have put on the boxing gloves.*]

KING BINGO: Are you ready? Box!

[*A wild battle takes place. And then the two Princes simultaneously hit each other in the eye. Again the crowd cheers. The Princes stagger apart and turn round and round, holding their eyes.*]

KING BINGO: That was fine! Now get on with it.

PRINCE PUMPKIN [*out of breath*]: No—thank you—Your Majesty! I think I'll stop while—while I still have one eye left!

KING BINGO: Then, Prince Pipkin, you'll have to finish the fight with Sir John Hithard.

SIR JOHN HITHARD [*rubbing his hands; in good humor again*]: With pleasure, Your Majesty!

PRINCE PIPKIN: No! No!! NO!!!

KING BINGO: No?

PRINCE PIPKIN [*still holding his eye; groaning*]: No, Your Majesty! I've had enough! I will return to my own Kingdom and look somewhere else for a bride!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA [*to* QUEEN CAROLINE]: I can't help feeling very pleased, but I do hope the poor dears aren't hurt.

KING BINGO: What's that? Poor dears—hurt! Cowards!!

[PRINCES PIPKIN *and* PUMPKIN *go out through the archway with their arms around each other's neck.*]

QUEEN CAROLINE: Bingo, don't be too hard on the poor things. I'm sure they did their best.

KING BINGO [*to the Court*]: Ladies and gentlemen: You have seen how shamefully the three suitors for my daughter's hand have failed.

ALL: Yes, Your Majesty!

KING BINGO: Jeams! Oh, Jeams! Send for the Town Crier!

[JEAMS *goes out hurriedly through the archway.*] This must certainly be made known throughout the length and breadth of our Kingdom.

[*The* TOWN CRIER *enters with his dinner bell. He is shaking with fright.* JEAMS *pushes him toward* KING BINGO.]

KING BINGO: Step nearer, sirrah!

TOWN CRIER [*ringing his bell*]: Oh yes! Oh yes! Oh yes!

JEAMS [*knowing he is speaking to an inferior; shaking him*]: 'Old yer noise!

KING BINGO: Now, sirrah, perhaps you're feeling better and can listen to my instructions—

TOWN CRIER [*ringing his bell*]: Oh yes! Oh yes! Oh yes!

KING BINGO: Bless my soul! Does this idiot always behave like this?

JEAMS: He's frightened, Your Majesty.

KING BINGO: I thought something was wrong.

JEAMS [*to the* TOWN CRIER]: Now then, pull yourself together!

TOWN CRIER: Oh yes! Oh yes! Oh yes!

KING BINGO: Stop that at once! Can't you do as you're told?

TOWN CRIER: Oh yes! Oh yes! Oh yes!

QUEEN CAROLINE: I do think, my dear, that the poor man must be wound up.

KING BINGO: Well, does any one know how to stop the machinery?

JEAMS: This is a good way, Your Majesty.

TOWN CRIER: Oh yes! Oh yes! Oh—

[JEAMS *places his hand over the* TOWN CRIER'S *mouth.*]

QUEEN CAROLINE: Quick, Bingo, speak before he breaks out again!

KING BINGO: I want you to cry out in all the streets of my Kingdom that the Princess Potentilla is still unbetrothed, all the suitors having failed disgracefully to win her hand. And—

[*The* TOWN CRIER *starts to ring his bell and cry out.* JEAMS *pushes him out of the doorway at the left.*]

[*As the sounds die away in the distance and the people of the Court begin their chatter again, the* SWINEHERD *enters through the archway. The people express astonishment at his appearance.* JEAMS *goes to him threateningly.*]

JEAMS: What does this mean, young man?

SWINEHERD: It means—

JEAMS: Go round to the back door, if you please.

SWINEHERD: I wish to speak to the King.

JEAMS: And do yer think 'Is Majesty wants to speak to the likes of you? Go on! Out of it!

POTENTILLA: Father, what's all that fuss about at the door?

KING BINGO: I'll find out. Jeams, what's up?

JEAMS: There's a low fellow here that says he wants to speak to you, Sire. I'm trying to make him clear out, but he won't budge. Just plain obstinacy, I calls it.

POTENTILLA: Oh, Papa, he's got such a nice face! Do let him speak.

KING BINGO: Certainly, Tilly. You don't mind, Caroline?

QUEEN CAROLINE: Not at all, although it isn't often done.

KING BINGO [*to the* LORD CHAMBERLAIN]: Bring him into our Royal Presence!

LORD CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, O King.

[*The* SWINEHERD *is led to the throne and kneels before the King.*]

KING BINGO: Well, young man, what can I do for you?

SWINEHERD: I crave a boon, Sire.

KING BINGO: A balloon? What for?

QUEEN CAROLINE: Do attend, my love: he said *boon*, not *balloon.*

PRINCESS POTENTILLA [*in a loud whisper*]: He means a favor, Papa.

KING BINGO: Why doesn't he say what he means? [*to the* SWINEHERD] Do you mean a favor?

SWINEHERD: Yes, Sire.

KING BINGO: Well, out with it! What is it?

SWINEHERD: I beg to be allowed to try to win the Princess Potentilla's love and hand in marriage.

ALL [*after a pause, when every one has recovered his*

breath]: What!—Goodness gracious!—What impertinence!—Have you ever!—Turn him out!—Away with him!—Off with his head!

KING BINGO [*still gasping*]: What the— How the— What on earth are you talking about? You, a common, ragged — Why, you must be mad!

SWINEHERD: I am, Sire—mad with love for your daughter.

QUEEN CAROLINE: Well! I never—

KING BINGO [*rising*]: What ho! A guard there! [*The two Sentries step forward.*] Remove me this wretch!

[*The Sentries take the* SWINEHERD *between them.*]

QUEEN CAROLINE: Oh, Bingo, don't be *too* hard on him!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Yes, Papa, do be kind. I'm sure he means no harm; and he has such a nice face!

KING BINGO: Nice face, indeed! I'd have you all know I'm in one of my Royal Rages, and unless something—I don't care what—is done in less than no time, I'll chop off the slave's head with my own hands!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: You wouldn't do that!

KING BINGO: Wouldn't I, though!

QUEEN CAROLINE [*fanning him with her handkerchief*]: There, there! Calm yourself, Bingo dear, calm yourself, pray. [*Turning to the* SWINEHERD; *not unkindly*] I'm sure that Mr.—pardon me, I didn't *quite* get the name —will retire of his own accord before His Majesty deigns to chop off his head. It would be so mussy, you know, if he did.

SWINEHERD [*bowing*]: Your Majesty, when I am asked to leave in so gracious a manner, by so fair a lady, I can-

The Swineherd kneels before the throne.

not do otherwise than comply. I have the honor to bid you all good day!

KING BINGO [*wiping his brow with his bandanna handkerchief*]: Good day! Good riddance!

[*The* SWINEHERD *bows again, very low, and then goes out through the archway.*]

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Don't be rude, Papa. He did speak very nicely. Anyway, I liked him a great deal more than any of those ugly Princes.

QUEEN CAROLINE: Tilly!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Well, I did.

KING BINGO: That will do, Tilly. Let's change the subject. I don't want to get into another Royal Rage. [*To the Court*] Ladies and Gentlemen: The Court is now dismissed for the day. [*Yawning cavernously*] Ah-ha-ha-ha-ha!

[*All the Court, including* QUEEN CAROLINE, PRINCESS POTENTILLA, *the* LORD CHAMBERLAIN, JEAMS, *and the two Sentries, also yawn and stretch.*]

KING BINGO: Come, Caroline! Come, Tilly! We'll go and have tea.

[KING BINGO, QUEEN CAROLINE, *and* PRINCESS POTENTILLA *go out through the center archway. As they slowly pass by, the Court sings.*]

ALL [*singing*]:

Long live the King and Queen
And the Princess Potentilla! *

* The music for this song and dance, and also for the closing chorus, the Royal Auditors and the end of Act II, will be found on the last pages of this volume.

[*As soon as the Royal Family is gone, the* LORD CHAMBERLAIN *tiptoes to the archway and looks after them. The singing stops.*]

LORD CHAMBERLAIN [*turning to the Court; in a loud whisper*]: All right, they're gone!

[*They all join hands and dance round in a ring.*]

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ACT II

This is the nicest scene you ever saw, for it is the place where the Royal Pigs are kept—the Royal Piggeries—in a remote part of the Royal Gardens. Although KING BINGO *is very poor and doesn't think he can afford even to buy himself a new pair of bedroom slippers (goodness knows he needs them!), yet he always spends the little pocket money he has on his pigs. Down left, we see a high green fence which forms a square—the Royal Piggeries. There are no cracks or crannies in the fence. If you wish to look in, you will have to stand on your toes and peek over the top. No flowers are to be found near the Royal Piggeries, because* KING BINGO *likes only pigs, but there are some stiff, curious-looking trees, eight of them in two rows, making a pathway which leads from the back toward the Royal Piggeries. It looks as if this part of the Royal Gardens were on a high hill; there is not another thing to be seen in the distance except sky.*

It is after tea time. As the curtain rises, twelve shepherds are discovered dancing together. The dance is no more than over when HODGSON, *the Royal Head Gardener, comes rushing in from the right as fast as his old legs will carry him.*

HODGSON [*in great excitement*]: Stop, stop, you fellers! Wot's all this noise about? Go back and look after your sheep! The King's comin'!

SHEPHERDS [*aghast*]: The King!

HODGSON: You'll catch it 'ot if 'e finds you 'ere! "Off with them 'eads!"—that's wot 'e'll say to you!

[*All the* SHEPHERDS *tremble violently and then run off at the left.*]

[*The* FIRST *and* SECOND SENTRIES, *dressed as in Act I, enter at the right in goose-step, their guns over their shoulders. All movements are made together. They behave just like puppets on strings. When* KING BINGO *appears, they stand very erect and very still with their guns at their sides.* KING BINGO *now enters, followed by the* FIRST *and* SECOND COURTIERS *and a few retainers.* HODGSON, *who has been bowing very humbly near the Royal Piggeries—with no one paying the slightest attention to him—hobbles forward and, after considerable exertion, manages to kneel upon one knee before* KING BINGO.]

HODGSON: If it please Your Majesty—

KING BINGO: Get up, you dirty fellow! It doesn't please me to have you kneeling in the mud. How could it?

HODGSON [*rising painfully*]: I was goin' to say, Your Majesty, that the new fences for the pig runs are now finished, and I'm 'opin' that you'll like them.

KING BINGO: Yes, they look all right, Hodgson.

HODGSON [*beaming*]: An' they'll last too, Your Majesty. They're made o' the best material, they are.

[KING BINGO *crosses to the fence and stands on tiptoe to look over.*]

KING BINGO: I can't see any pigs. Where are they?

HODGSON [*suddenly frightened*]: I—I forgot to tell Your Majesty!

KING BINGO: Well, what is it? What is it?

HODGSON: Oh, Your Majesty, it's somethin' turrible! All the Royal Pigs escaped when we was puttin' up the new fence!

KING BINGO [*wrathfully*]: Do you mean to say all my lovely pigs are gone?

HODGSON [*tearfully*]: Pardon, Your Majesty, pardon!

KING BINGO: You won't get it if what you say about my pigs is true!

FIRST COURTIER [*twirling his mustache*]: Doubtless, Sire, the Royal Pigs have gone only for a little flight around the grounds. They will return presently.

KING BINGO [*in another Royal Rage*]: Silence! You talk like an idiot! Do you think they're a lot of silly birds? . . . My poor, lovely, fat, pinky pigs! I shall never see you again! [*He weeps on the* SECOND COURTIER'S *shoulder.*]

SECOND COURTIER: There, there, there! Don't cry, Sire. They shall be found!

KING BINGO: Oh, my poor pigs!

HODGSON [*howling*]: Oh, the poor pigs!

FIRST *and* SECOND COURTIERS [*also crying; together*]: Those poor pigs!

[*The* SWINEHERD *enters from the right.*]

KING BINGO [*drying his eyes with the* SECOND COURTIER'S *cape*]: Who comes here to disturb my Royal Grief?

HODGSON: It's a swineherd, Your Majesty.

KING BINGO: It looks like the rude fellow who forced his way through the front door of the palace.

FIRST COURTIER: It's the same one, Sire.

KING BINGO: Ho there, boy! What do you want? Another balloon?

SWINEHERD: I have come, Your Majesty, to apologize for intruding upon you a short while ago, and to show you that I know my true position and worth. I beg you to let me be your swineherd.

KING BINGO: Well, that's more like it. I'm glad you've come to your senses. So you want to be my swineherd, do you?

SWINEHERD: Yes, Sire.

KING BINGO: How long were you in your last place?

SWINEHERD: Ever since I was born, Sire.

KING BINGO: If there's a vacancy you shall have it, but only on condition that you find my pinky pigs, for they are lost—alas!

SWINEHERD [*bowing*]: Thank you, Sire. I shall do my best.

KING BINGO [*to the* FIRST *and* SECOND COURTIERS]: Go, call the Royal Auditors. We'll have a look at the servants' list.

[*The two Courtiers walk a few paces to the left, and, putting their hands to their mouths, cry out together.*]

FIRST *and* SECOND COURTIERS: The Royal Auditors! [*They pause for a moment and then call again:*] The Royal Auditors!

[*From the right enter the two* ROYAL AUDITORS, *dancing. Between them they carry a very large book. As soon as*

they reach the center of the scene, they open the book and sing.]

ROYAL AUDITORS [*singing*]:

We elegant men we write from ten
To twenty lists a day
Of those that work for glory,
And those that work for pay;
Yes, soldier, courtier, swineherd, cook,
We have them all in this great book,
And if you wish to take a look,
We'll never tell you nay—
We'll never tell,
We'll never tell,
We'll never tell you nay.

We do pretend to comprehend
The million servants here
Within King Bingo's Palace
In the Royal Hemisphere;
For every name in black and white,
To please most any appetite,
Is written on these pages bright
Without a blot or smear—
Without a blot,
Without a blot,
Without a blot or smear.

Our eminence is our defense
For any wrongs we do;

Indeed, they are not many—
Perhaps not more than two;
Sometimes we spell an "i" for "e,"
Or get mixed up on pedigree,
Or write down "flea" for "jubilee,"
But these mistakes are few—
But these mistakes,
But these mistakes,
But these mistakes are few.

We auditors are bachelors,
Save when affairs of State
Demand that we be martyrs,
And take to us a mate;
We may have ideas of our own—
Our heads are made of cheese and bone—
But when the word comes from the Throne,
We promptly abdicate—
We promptly ab-,
We promptly ab-,
We promptly abdicate.

[KING BINGO *joins in the last four lines and does a little dance with his arm around* HODGSON'S *neck. The Courtiers nearly faint with shame, but the* FIRST COURTIER *recovers sufficiently to approach* KING BINGO *and tap him gently on the shoulder.*]

FIRST COURTIER: Excuse me, Your Majesty. Let me remind you that you are being observed.

KING BINGO [*stopping; breathless*]: Ah, yes—yes! Of

course—I suppose I ought not have done that. H'm! Forget it, all of you, forget it.

ALL [*bowing low*]: Certainly, Your Majesty!

KING BINGO: Now let's consult the book. [*The* ROYAL AUDITORS *hold the book before him.*] Turn to the letter "S." Ah, here we are—"Swineherds." Timothy Jones, dismissed last week for eating too many cream tarts. [*Turning to the* SWINEHERD] Well, well, it seems, my lad, you've got the job. But you must first find my pigs.

SWINEHERD: I will find them, Sire. Have I your permission to start at once?

KING BINGO: The sooner the better.

SWINEHERD [*bowing low*]: I dart, I fly! [*He runs off at the left.*]

KING BINGO [*looking after him*]: Very energetic young man, that, Hodgson.

HODGSON: 'E is, Your Majesty. I'll keep my eye on 'im so 'e doesn't get into mischief. [*He goes off after the* SWINEHERD.]

[PRINCESS POTENTILLA *enters at the right with the* FIRST *and* SECOND COURT LADIES, JANE, *and several other women of the Court.*]

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Oh, here you are, Father. I've been looking for you.

KING BINGO: My dear, I'm greatly distressed. All my lovely pigs are gone—lost!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Oh, I *am* sorry, Papa! But isn't any one looking for them?

KING BINGO: Yes, Tilly, I've just sent that young swineherd after them—the fellow that behaved so disgrace-

fully in the Palace. If he doesn't find them, off with his head!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: You wouldn't do that!

KING BINGO: You don't know me, Tilly.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: I do hope he'll succeed. He has such a nice face!

KING BINGO: I don't know about that, but I think he may make a good swineherd. I may employ him, you know.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: No, really, Papa?

KING BINGO: Honest to goodness! He apologized so handsomely for his mad behavior—

[*Squeals and grunts are heard.*]

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: What a funny noise! What can it be?

KING BINGO [*wild with joy*]: Oh! Oh! Tilly, Tilly, it sounds like—like my darling pigs!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA [*looking off*]: I can see the Swineherd coming up the pathway!

KING BINGO: Quick, Tilly. Look again! Your sight's better than mine. Has he got the pigs?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Yes—no—I can't see them, Papa! I hope he has. I don't want him beheaded. Here he comes!

[*The* SWINEHERD *enters carrying a large market basket. Over the rim of the basket can be seen the pink heads of the pigs. Of course, they are squealing, but you really can't tell whether the noise comes from them or from the Court Ladies who have turned their backs on us.*]

KING BINGO [*clapping his hands*]: Hurrah! Well done! I never expected it, my lad! You're a marvel! You shall

have a place in our service right away. [*Caressing the pigs*] Papa's sweet little dears! [*To the* SWINEHERD] Take them into the Piggeries and give them a good feed.

SWINEHERD: Yes, Sire. I am very grateful to you.

KING BINGO: Don't mention it! Don't mention it! [*The* SWINEHERD *goes inside the fencing.*]

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: What a nice face!

KING BINGO: That being arranged to our complete satisfaction, we'll now go and inspect the Royal Vegetable Gardens. Come, gentlemen. What are you going to do, Tilly?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: I think I'll stay here a while, Father, and watch the pigs being fed.

KING BINGO: That's right, my dear, that's right. I'm glad to see you taking such an interest in botany. [*He goes out at the right with his retinue.*]

FIRST COURT LADY [*in her grandest manner*]: May I venture to suggest, Princess, that the flower garden or the greenhouse would be a more fitting, more gracious place, than—

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Nonsense! I love watching pigs. [*She goes to the fence and looks over.*] Oh, what funny, greedy little things! Aren't they sweet! . . . Swineherd, where do you come from—I mean, what Kingdom?

SWINEHERD [*at the fence, only his head showing*]: That I cannot—must not tell you, Princess.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Oh, bother! Why not? Are you ashamed? Well, tell me this then: Why did you behave so—so—

SWINEHERD: Rashly?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Yes, when you came into the Palace. Why did you?

SWINEHERD: That, also, I cannot answer, Princess.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA [*turning away*]: You're the most aggravating person I ever met!

SWINEHERD: Only aggravating, Princess?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: I shan't talk to you any more. I think I've lowered myself enough by speaking to you at all. [*She turns to go.*]

SWINEHERD: Princess! I beg you to hear me—

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Certainly not! Who do you think I am? Come, ladies, we will go.

[*They all pick up their skirts very high and start to walk away most haughtily—some of them even holding their noses—when music is heard coming from the pigsty.* PRINCESS POTENTILLA *stops.*]

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Hush! What is that lovely music?

FIRST COURT LADY: Music? You mean *smell*, Princess.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: No, no! Listen!

[*They all stop.*]

FIRST COURT LADY: It comes from the pigsty.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Go quickly and ask the Swineherd what it is—what instrument!

FIRST COURT LADY [*demurring*]: Oh—please, Princess—I think it would be more fitting—

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Go at once!

[*The* FIRST COURT LADY *lifts her skirt very high with one hand, holds her nose with the other, and trips across to the Piggeries.*]

FIRST COURT LADY [*speaking through her nose*]: Swide-

herd, cub here, sir! The Pridcess desires be to ask you what idstrubent you are playig.

SWINEHERD [*still on the other side of the fence*]: It is but a cooking pot that I have made. When the pot boils, it sings that tune, and he who owns it shall some day find his true love.

FIRST COURT LADY [*going back to* PRINCESS POTENTILLA]: Princess, it is but a cooking pot that sings when it boils.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Oh, how lovely! What else did he say?

FIRST COURT LADY: Some nonsense, Madam, about finding one's true love if one owns it.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Ask him how much he'll sell it for.

FIRST COURT LADY: Madam, I—

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Go!

FIRST COURT LADY [*at the sty; again speaking through her nose*]: Her Hidess desires to know the price of the cookick pot.

SWINEHERD: She may have it for—a kiss!

FIRST COURT LADY [*horrified*]: Oh, you impudent wretch! [*She rushes back to* PRINCESS POTENTILLA.] Princess! Princess! I scarce dare tell you what he says—

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: What is it? I'm just dying to know!

FIRST COURT LADY: The price is— Oh, what a disgrace!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Oh, what a disgrace?

FIRST COURT LADY: No, no! The price is—a kiss!!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Is that all? That's easily arranged. Go quickly and give him one!

[*Really this is too much, even from a Princess.*]

First Court Lady [*stiffly*]: Madam, forgive me if I remind you that there was no mention of my having to kiss *swineherds* when I took up my duties here at your father's Court.

Princess Potentilla: I'm sorry, but there doesn't seem to be any other way, and I simply must have the cooking pot.

First Court Lady: Then I beg permission to resign my post, Madam.

Princess Potentilla [*airily*]: By all means.

[*The* First Court Lady, *after making a very low curtsy, sweeps majestically out at the right.*]

Princess Potentilla [*to the* Second Court Lady]: You pay the Swineherd, please.

Second Court Lady: I also beg leave to resign, Madam.

Princess Potentilla: With pleasure.

[*The* Second Court Lady *also makes a low curtsy and follows her companion.*]

Princess Potentilla [*who has been biting her nails; to her maid*]: Jane, now you be a sensible girl and pay for the cooking pot for me.

Jane: If you please, Princess—

Princess Potentilla [*stamping her foot*]: Do as I say! Go at once!

Jane [*bowing*]: Very well, Madam. [*She crosses to the fence; to the* Swineherd] Her Highness has sent me to pay for the cooking pot.

Swineherd: No, no, fair lady! That will not do. A kiss from the Princess herself, or the pot belongs to me!

JANE [*returning to* PRINCESS POTENTILLA]: It's no use, Madam; if you wish to possess the cooking pot, he says you'll have to pay the price yourself.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: What an insolent wretch! Tell him to come here. [*After a pause*] I will pay.

JANE [*at the fence*]: Swineherd, Swineherd, come out of the sty! The Princess will pay!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA [*all in a flutter*]: Oh, what a dreadful position to be in! And I'm a Royal Princess too! Gather around me, ladies, and hold out your skirts so nobody can see me! Now, Swineherd, quick, take your pay before I faint! Quick!

[*The* SWINEHERD *steps into the ring with an earthenware bowl in his hands and kisses* PRINCESS POTENTILLA. *And, queer to say, she does not faint.*]

[KING BINGO *enters unobserved at the right, and sees the whole terrible affair. He is followed almost immediately by his retinue.*]

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: There, that's done! Now give me the cooking pot. . . . Gracious! There's Father!

KING BINGO: Tilly!!! What does this mean? I shall certainly tell your mother! Have you forgotten that you come of a Royal House with Royal Blood and everything? Why, you behave like any kitchen maid! Shame, shame! [*Turning fiercely on the* SWINEHERD] As for you, sirrah, what the dickens do you mean kissing my daughter?

SWINEHERD: If I have offended, I humbly crave your pardon, Sire. It was a fair bargain. She wanted to buy my cooking pot; the price was a kiss.

KING BINGO: Well, 'pon my soul! You're all mad—that's what it is—mad to behave like this! Give me that bowl, Tilly! You, sirrah, get back to your work at once! Tilly, go up to the Nursery at once! And don't let me hear another word from either of you, not another word! Ladies, conduct my daughter to the Royal Nursery.

[PRINCESS POTENTILLA, *who doesn't look half so sorry as she might, goes out at the right with the Court Ladies.*]

KING BINGO: Where's Hodgson? [*Shouting*] Hodgson! Hodgson!

FIRST COURTIER: Sire, permit me to find the man for you.

[HODGSON *enters from the left.*]

HODGSON: Did you call, Your Majesty?

KING BINGO: Call? Are you deaf, Hodgson? Are you?

HODGSON: No, Your Majesty, not yet.

KING BINGO: Didn't you hear me howling for you? Is it fitting that a King should have to howl for his gardener? Answer me that!

HODGSON: Your Majesty—

KING BINGO: Gracious goodness! Can't I get a word in edgeways? Now listen carefully. That Swineherd has been kissing my daughter. He must be mad. He'll be kissing my pigs next. Keep an eye on him, Hodgson, and if he breaks out again—off with his head! You understand?

HODGSON: Yes, Your Majesty.

FIRST COURTIER: 'Tis indeed what he deserves—off with his head!

[*All the Courtiers laugh.*]

The King discovers the Princess and the Swineherd.

KING BINGO: Silence! You'll disturb my pigs. Go, one of you, and ask the mad Swineherd how fare my darlings.

[*The* FIRST COURTIER *tiptoes to the fence, looks over, and then returns in the same manner with his finger to his lips.*]

FIRST COURTIER [*in a loud whisper*]: The Royal Pigs sleep, Sire!

[*The two Sentries, who have been standing quite still ever since they came in, now shoulder their guns, and all—soldiers, courtiers, and* KING BINGO*—tiptoe out at the right, singing as they go.*]

ALL [*singing very softly*]:

Oh, step lightly on tiptoe,
And do not make a peep;
Whisper softly, whisper low,
The Royal Pigs do sleep!

[*The singing dies away in the distance; the sky becomes red and gold, and*

THE CURTAIN SLOWLY FALLS

ACT III

This is the Tower Nursery, the place where PRINCESS POTENTILLA *is confined whenever she is naughty—and that is rather often. The Tower Nursery was made for her when she was a very, very little girl. Of course, she has long outgrown it, but* QUEEN CAROLINE *and* KING BINGO *still send her here every time she is bad, because here she can kick and scream all she wants to, without disturbing the rest of the Palace. It's a nice enough room, and it's so high up from the ground that only the tops of the tallest trees can be seen through the big window at the back. There is not very much furniture in the room—just a table, a few small chairs, a doll's house, some picture books, and a tiny telephone on a stand. The telephone looks like a toy, but it really works. There is also a small bed in the corner near the window; and one door, at the left.*

It is before supper time. When the curtain rises, PRINCESS POTENTILLA *is discovered in one of her tantrums.*

PRINCESS POTENTILLA [*stamping her foot*]: It's ridiculous! Treating me as if I were a child! [*She tries the door.*] Locked! [*She kicks at it.*] I simply won't stand it! Locked in here like a convict just because I kissed a

swineherd! [*She goes to the telephone.*] I'll ring up Father and tell him what I think of him. . . . Hullo! Hullo! Put me through to Papa's study, please. . . . Hullo! [*At this moment,* KING BINGO, *unseen by* PRINCESS POTENTILLA, *who has her back toward him, enters very quietly, then shuts the door, but does not lock it. In his hand is a large key.* PRINCESS POTENTILLA *continues her telephoning:*] Hullo! Is that you, Papa?

KING BINGO [*loudly*]: It is, my dear.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Don't yell so! I want to get out of here.

KING BINGO: Can't be done.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Why not?

KING BINGO: I have given my Royal Word—

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Your Royal Word—royal rubbish! [*She hangs up the receiver, turns round, and sees her father.*] For goodness' sake! When did you come in?

KING BINGO: A few minutes ago. Now, what is all this nonsense about wanting to get out?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: I'm going to get out, so there!

KING BINGO: I fancy your dear mother has other views, Tilly. I have given her my Royal Word that you shall stay locked up here until we can properly dispose of you. When she heard the reason, she said the punishment was not half severe enough.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Just because of one kiss!

KING BINGO: One kiss has destroyed a kingdom before, my child, but I don't intend to let it destroy mine.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: I don't care what you and Mother intend! I'm not going to stay locked up here any longer!

KING BINGO: Let me tell you something, Tilly: if it wasn't for this beastly thing called my "Royal Word," I'd let you out in a jiffy!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA [*sweetly*]: Oh, Papa darling, can't you forget your Royal Word—just for once?

KING BINGO: I can forget, my child, but your dear mother couldn't. Terrible thing to have a memory like hers! It's the kind that always remembers the duties. With a little time, I think I could devise another kind of memory—one that would become a perfect blank whenever there was a duty to be performed.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Oh, you're just talking to try to make me forget I'm locked up—but I won't, I won't!

KING BINGO: My dear Tilly, you read me like a book!

[JEAMS *enters with a telegram.*]

JEAMS: A telegram for Your Majesty.

KING BINGO: I don't want it. You may have it.

JEAMS: But, Sire—

KING BINGO: You talk too much, sir! I told you I don't want the telegram. I don't need it, therefore I can't see why I should be *made* to read it.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Give it to me, Jeams; I'll read it. [*Reading*] "Sire, we—to wit, Prince Florizel, Prince Pipkin, and Prince Pumpkin—being all of Royal Blood and everything, do herewith give solemn notice that we none of us take No for our final answer, and that we are all firmly resolved to prove by some valiant adventure, to be hereinafter determined upon—" Gracious, Papa, it's just as well you didn't try to read it! The words are much too long for you.

KING BINGO [*sadly*]: And yet, as King, I'm supposed to be the wisest! [*He sighs.*] But go on with the telegram—or is it a history?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA [*reading*]: "—hereinafter determined upon, that we are all worthy of the hand of your proud and lovely daughter, Princess Potentilla."

KING BINGO: This is outrageous! Who do they think they are? Do they *all* propose to marry you? Jeams!

JEAMS: Sire!

KING BINGO: Did you not give the Guards my order to chase those good-for-nothing boys out of the Kingdom?

JEAMS: I did, Sire, but they—

KING BINGO [*in a Royal Rage*]: Don't talk so much, sir! Well—well—go on—go on! Are you as dumb as you look? What happened?

JEAMS: I regret to say, Your Majesty, that although the three Princes were pretty well battered in the palace the other day, yet they proved too much for the Royal Guards.

KING BINGO: Stuff and nonsense! My Guards are splendid fellows.

JEAMS: Notwithstanding, Your Majesty, had it not been for the new Swineherd—

PRINCESS POTENTILLA [*eagerly*]: The one I kissed?

KING BINGO: Tilly! How could you! Jeams, forget it!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Oh, don't be so silly! Every one knows why I'm locked up here. Go on, Jeams, tell me what the Swineherd did.

JEAMS [*forgetting his elegant diction*]: Well, miss, he jumped all over them three Princes in fine style, and

ran 'em out of the bloomin' city before you could say Jack Robinson!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Goody! Goody! I wish I'd been there to see the fun!

KING BINGO: That was well done. The Swineherd's strength and valor come from minding pigs. He's a brave lad; I must go and reward him.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: What are you going to give him, Papa?

KING BINGO: I'll give him a penny, and let him kiss my hand.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: For pity's sake! Is that all?

KING BINGO: You don't understand, my dear, how extremely fortunate you are in being able to touch these royal hands any time you want. But he, poor fellow, will remember the feel of these royal fingers forever and ever.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: What are you going to do—scratch him?

KING BINGO [*in another rage*]: Tilly, I'm surprised at you! Where's your duty? Where's your respect? [*To* JEAMS:] Where's the key?

JEAMS: In your hand, Sire.

[KING BINGO *merely grunts in reply. As he goes out, he gives the key to* JEAMS.]

KING BINGO: Keep the door locked, Jeams. If she escapes, I'll have your head!

[JEAMS *locks the door after* KING BINGO *has gone, and then takes the key out of the lock and holds it firmly in his hand.*]

JEAMS: Now you've done it, miss! I'm afraid we're in for a big Royal Rage this time, and that certainly do blow up the palace!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: You're not really afraid of Papa, are you, Jeams?

JEAMS: Well, I don't want to lose me job.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: I should think there were lots of nice families that would like to have such a nice butler to buttle for them.

JEAMS: Maybe, miss, but after servin' a King, I wouldn't know 'ow to serve a gentleman—the change would be too much for me.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Jeams, I certainly don't want you to go. I think you're the sweetest butler we've ever had.

JEAMS: Do you really, miss? Do you *really?* Then may I make so bold as to tell you, miss, that ever since I set foot 'ere in the palace, my 'eart 'as swelled up with pride at the thought of servin' you?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Has it really? How nice!

JEAMS: Nice! It's 'eaven!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: And yet it's all very strange. Why should you want to serve me? I'd hate to wait on people for a living.

JEAMS: But when your devotion rises to such 'eights—

[*He puts his hand first on the right, then on the left side of his chest, where his heart should be.*]

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Oh, do go on, Jeams! You look so funny. By the way, are you trying to tell me that you love me or something?

JEAMS: In my 'umble way, miss, and with the greatest respect—I am.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Isn't that convenient! Of course, Jeams, if you really and truly loved me, you'd let me out of here—

JEAMS: Alas, miss, even a butler 'as 'is honor. As the poet sings, miss:

I could not love you 'alf so well,
Loved I not honor more.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Who's she?

JEAMS: 'Oo's 'oo?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Honor Moore. I never heard of her.

JEAMS: It ain't a lydy, miss; it's a sentiment.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Oh, bother the sentiment! Let me out.

JEAMS: No, I can't do it, miss.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: You can't? I'll see about that! [*She suddenly makes a grab at the key in* JEAMS's *hand, but he is too quick for her.*]

JEAMS: Now, please, Miss Tilly, don't you try any tricks! You know wot your Pa is. You 'eard wot 'e said.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: It's all your fault! If you'd be nice and let me out—

JEAMS: Then I'd lose me 'ead.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Your head is nothing to me, Jeams. It's a poor kind of head, anyhow.

JEAMS: I know, miss, but it's the only one I 'ave. [*The* SWINEHERD's *music is heard outside.*] Wot's that bloomin' noise?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA [*excitedly*]: Noise! It's the most wonderful music in all the world! [*She runs to the window and leans out.*]

JEAMS: Be careful! Be careful, miss! Come away from that window. You'll fall, you will. And this is the 'ighest tower in the palace.

[*The music stops.* JEAMS *brings* PRINCESS POTENTILLA *to the center of the room.*]

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Don't be stupid, Jeams! I'm not a baby. I don't go tumbling out of windows. [*The* SWINEHERD's *head appears above the window sill.* PRINCESS POTENTILLA *turns and sees him. She gives a little scream:*] Oh! Do watch out! It's so dangerous to go climbing about like this!

[*The* SWINEHERD *steps into the room.*]

JEAMS: 'Ere, 'ere! Wot's this mean?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Oh, you shouldn't have climbed up the tower wall! It isn't nice, and you might have fallen and killed yourself.

SWINEHERD [*in a low voice, so that* JEAMS *cannot hear*]: Nothing can harm me, Princess, while I love you.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Sh-h! Er—er—Jeams, do you mind being deaf and blind for a few moments?

JEAMS: Certainly not, miss. [*He obligingly screws up his eyes and puts his fingers in his ears.*]

PRINCESS POTENTILLA [*to the* SWINEHERD]: Now, you can say that all over again.

SWINEHERD: Nothing can harm me, while I love you.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: How delicious! But you really mustn't say it!

SWINEHERD: Why not?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Father would be furious if he heard it!

SWINEHERD: But it's true.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Well, perhaps the truth isn't always nice.

SWINEHERD: Don't you think it's nice?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: I—just a moment. [*She goes to* JEAMS *and takes one finger out of his ear.*] Were you listening, Jeams?

JEAMS: No, miss.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA [*replacing* JEAMS's *finger in his ear*]: Well, go on being deaf then.

SWINEHERD: Answer me, Princess: don't you think it's nice?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Well, I—

SWINEHERD: You do!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA [*smiling*]: Yes, I think I do; but what will Father say?

SWINEHERD: I have a feeling that he'll be as pleased as Punch when he learns about it. But do you really love me, even though I'm only a poor swineherd?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: I'd love you even though you were a chimney sweep!

SWINEHERD [*taking her hand*]: O Princess, let me kiss you again!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: No, no, I daren't! I'm so afraid Jeams is looking. He's a darling butler, but all butlers are deceiving.

SWINEHERD: Just one kiss on these little hands! [*She gives*

him her other hand. He kisses them both—several times.] They are like pink flowers!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: You know, you do say the most *delicious* things! No one else has ever been half so nice to me.

SWINEHERD: What about all the princes that have proposed to you? I'm sure they all said that your eyes were like stars, and your hair—

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Oh, yes—that rubbish! I never even listen to them. . . . Dear, oh, dear! I simply must get out of here. Won't you help me?

SWINEHERD: That is what I came for, Princess.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: You came to rescue me?

SWINEHERD: Yes.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: How exciting! But you mustn't hurt poor Jeams. After all, he *is* our butler.

SWINEHERD: I shall carry you in my arms, out of the window, and down the side of the tower.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: I daren't! How in the world did you climb up here?

SWINEHERD: On the wings of love.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Gracious! I thought you came up the drain pipe!

SWINEHERD: Come with me. I'll carry you safely to the ground.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: My goodness, no! I'd scream!

SWINEHERD: Then how can I rescue you?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: I don't know. But it can't be through the window. Don't you see, I am a Princess, a real Princess, and to be found climbing down a drain pipe in the

arms of a swineherd is hardly—well, you know what I mean.

SWINEHERD: Can't you forget my humble calling—just for once?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Yes, *I* could, but I'm so afraid no one else would. Besides, we might be captured. Then I just know Father would have your head cut off. He's terribly strict about such things.

SWINEHERD: Then what is to be done?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA [*in a half-whisper, looking toward* JEAMS]: What about stealing Jeams's key?

SWINEHERD: I never steal.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Then, just take it. . . . No, that won't do. He'd fight and summon the guards. Now, let me think. Do you ever try to think? It's an awful bother —makes my head twizzle round and round.

SWINEHERD: I seldom try. . . . Princess—

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Sh-h! Don't let's talk. Let's think. [*They both sit down. There is a pause; then* PRINCESS POTENTILLA *jumps up excitedly.*] I've thought of a plan! I shall—just a moment! [*She goes to* JEAMS *and again removes one finger from his ear.*] I say, Jeams, are you *quite* sure you can't hear what I'm saying?

JEAMS: Not a word, miss. And though eavesdroppin' is customary in my profession, I've never stooped to it.

[PRINCESS POTENTILLA *carefully replaces the finger in* JEAMS's *ear and returns to the* SWINEHERD.]

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: I really think he's being truthful. Now, I'm going to phone for the Town Crier.

SWINEHERD: The Town Crier? What for?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: I'll tell you afterwards. [*At the telephone*] Hullo! Hullo! Have you seen the Town Crier about anywhere? . . . In the kitchen? Send him up to the Tower Nursery at once. Yes, thank you. [*To the* SWINEHERD] You can't guess why I'm sending for him? Well, I'm going to instruct him to go through the city and cry out that the Princess—that's me—is in great danger, two horrible dragons having locked her in the Tower.

SWINEHERD: What good will that do?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Well, don't you see, then all the valiant young men in the city will want to come to my rescue. Mother will be all fussed up at the noise, and she'll come running up here to see if I'm safe; and then you'll come in at the window and tell her that you've beaten off the dragons.

SWINEHERD: What, more dragons?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Oh, yes—lots of dragons! Mother is terrified of dragons. Then she'll see I'm safe once more, and she'll be so pleased that she will forget she ever said I was to stay locked up—and out I shall come! Isn't that clever?

SWINEHERD: Wonderful, Princess!

[*A bell is heard.*]

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: There's the Town Crier!

SWINEHERD: Then I'll be off, but I won't be far away. When you need me, I'll return. Good-by, my Princess. [*He kisses her hand.*]

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Good-by, dear Swineherd! Be careful!

SWINEHERD [*climbing out of the window*]: Nothing can harm me, Princess, while—

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: I love you. [*The* SWINEHERD *disappears.* PRINCESS POTENTILLA *watches him, and then goes to* JEAMS, *who is still standing in the same position, and takes his fingers out of his ears.*] You may look now, Jeams.

JEAMS: Thank you very much, miss.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Not at all. Thank *you,* Jeams. [*The* TOWN CRIER'S *bell sounds louder.*]

JEAMS: Do I 'ear that pore ijiot of a Town Crier, miss?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Yes, I've sent for him. I've a little plan.

JEAMS: Oh, miss, pardon me for saying so, but don't make your Pa angry. 'E's threatened to 'ave me 'ead so often, 'e may do it some day. Then where'd I be?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Wandering about without a head, I suppose! [*She giggles.*] That would be funny!

JEAMS: Not for me, miss.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: I dare say you'd get used to it. [*The bell is heard just outside the door.*] Oh, there he is! Please let him in, Jeams, and then you may wait outside the door till he goes. And then, if you *must,* you may lock me up again. Do you really feel you must, Jeams—*dear* Jeams?

[*She looks at* JEAMS *very tenderly. It is almost too much for him. He mops his brow with a large bandanna handkerchief.*]

JEAMS: This is worse than bein' be'eaded! Yes, miss, I must keep my word—a pore butler's word.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Well, thank goodness it isn't a royal one! But I do think you're perfectly horrid, Jeams.

JEAMS [*his handkerchief to his eyes*]: It breaks me 'eart to 'ear you say so, miss.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Let the Town Crier in. [JEAMS *opens the door. The* TOWN CRIER *enters, timidly ringing his bell.*] Good afternoon, Town Crier.

TOWN CRIER: Oh yes! Oh yes! Oh yes!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Now, this is very important, and I want you to listen carefully. Do you think you can?

TOWN CRIER: Oh yes! Oh yes! Oh yes!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: I don't want to be severe with you.

TOWN CRIER: Oh yes! Oh yes! Oh yes!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Give me that bell, and be quiet!

TOWN CRIER: Oh yes! Oh yes! Oh— [PRINCESS POTENTILLA *takes the bell from the* TOWN CRIER. *He looks at his empty hand and begins to whimper:*] Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Oh, dear!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Now then, sit down and stop sniveling! Jeams, you may go.

JEAMS: But wot will you do, miss, if 'e breaks out all of a sudden?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: I can manage him.

JEAMS: I'll be just outside, miss.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: But not with your eye at the keyhole, I hope.

JEAMS: Lookin' through keyholes ain't one of me 'abits, miss. [*He goes out much offended. He is heard, turning the key in the lock.*]

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Now, dear Mr. Town Crier, I want

you to cry out all over the city that the Princess Potentilla is locked in the Tower and guarded by two dragons. Do you understand?

TOWN CRIER: Oh, dear! Oh, dear! I can't talk without my bell! Please give me my bell!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: You shall have it as soon as you've learned your piece. Now, repeat what I told you.

TOWN CRIER: "The Princess Potentilla is locked in with two dragons, and guarded by the Tower!"

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: My gracious, you are silly! I'm *not* locked in with two dragons. I'm locked in a tower *guarded* by two dragons.

TOWN CRIER: Oh yes! Oh yes! Oh yes!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Have you got that?

TOWN CRIER: Oh yes! Oh—

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Keep still! Now for the rest: All the young men of the Kingdom are invited to rescue her.

TOWN CRIER: "All the young men are invited to the Kingdom to be rescued—by her!"

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Do you know something? You are all but hopeless!

TOWN CRIER: Oh yes! Oh yes! Please give me back my bell!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: All right, but only if you keep still. Here you are. . . . Now, I'm going to write the whole thing out for you, so you'll make no mistakes. [*She writes very quickly, while the* TOWN CRIER *plays with his bell and looks terribly stupid. She then hands him the paper.*] There, you can read it.

TOWN CRIER [*lustily ringing his bell*]: Oh yes! Oh yes! Oh yes! Whereas—whereas—

Prince Charming reveals himself.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: My dear idiot, you have the paper upside down! [*She rights it for him.*] There now, and for goodness' sake try and get it right! [*She raps on the door.*] Jeams, Jeams, let the Town Crier out!

[*As the door is being unlocked, suddenly* KING BINGO's *voice is heard.*]

KING BINGO [*off*]: Out of my way, sirrah! [*The door opens and* KING BINGO *appears, followed by* PRINCE FLORIZEL, PRINCE PIPKIN, *and* PRINCE PUMPKIN. KING BINGO *looks at the* TOWN CRIER.] What are you doing here, sir?

TOWN CRIER [*ringing his bell*]: Oh yes! Oh yes! Oh yes! Whereas—

KING BINGO: Shut up! You're a perfect nuisance. Wherever I go, I fall over you and your infernal bell! Get out! Go on, get out! [*He kicks the* TOWN CRIER *out of the door. There is an awful crash outside, and then the bell can be heard bumping its way downstairs after its unfortunate owner.*]

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Oh, Father, how could you be so unkind! Now he'll get it all wrong!

KING BINGO: Get what all wrong? What have you been up to?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: I—I've lost my little black kitten, and he's going to cry it out in the streets—that's all.

KING BINGO: Very well. . . . Now, my dear daughter, I have some good news for you. I've changed my Royal Mind.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Oh, you're going to let me out?

KING BINGO: That would be breaking my Royal Word.

No, I've merely changed my Royal Mind. [*To the three Princes*] Come forward, boys. Don't be bashful. [*The three Princes step forward and bow very low to* PRINCESS POTENTILLA.] You remember these young men, Tilly?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Perfectly. They were the gentlemen who were so soundly thrashed—

KING BINGO: We choose to forget that painful occurrence. Well, my child, these three young men have persuaded me to give them another chance to win you—

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: But I—

KING BINGO: Don't interrupt your Royal Father. As I was saying, I'm giving them another chance to win you. You shall set each of them a task to perform. And if you're sensible, you won't make the tasks too difficult, for the sooner you get engaged, the sooner you'll be out of here.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: But, Papa—

KING BINGO: Not a word! I am determined to get you married off this season at any cost. You've become too much of a responsibility. Now, Tilly, I think you're very lucky, very lucky indeed. These boys aren't beauties perhaps, but they assure me they are nice and respectable and have a little money, and goodness knows that is as much as one can hope for these days. [*To the three Princes*] Come, speak up, boys!

PRINCE FLORIZEL: Set me a task, Princess. The more difficult it is, the more eager I shall be to accomplish it. Nothing is too great to win you, for your eyes are like stars, and your hair—

KING BINGO: Very touching little speech. Congratulations, young man. [KING BINGO *and* PRINCE FLORIZEL *solemnly shake hands.*] Answer him, Tilly.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Well, I really don't want to get engaged, but since you insist, Papa—

KING BINGO: I certainly do, my dear. Now, give the young man a task to perform.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: In the Forest of Zimbolio there lives a large green parrot with four legs, one golden eye, and a long silver tail. I want it.

PRINCE FLORIZEL [*bowing*]: You shall have it, O Princess. [PRINCES PIPKIN *and* PUMPKIN *advance, arm in arm.*]

PRINCE PIPKIN: And our task, Princess?

PRINCE PUMPKIN: Something more difficult than finding a mere parrot, we beg.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Sitting astride the Equator is a black jackass with a flowing mane of purest gold. Cut off the mane and bring it to me.

PRINCES PIPKIN *and* PUMPKIN [*together*]: It shall be done!

PRINCE PIPKIN [*embracing* PRINCE PUMPKIN]: She evidently favors one of us, me boy, or the task had not been so difficult!

PRINCE PUMPKIN: We'll win her yet! . . . But, I say, where *is* the Equator?

KING BINGO: All right, boys, you'd better start. It's going to take you quite a while. [*The three Princes bow to* KING BINGO *and* PRINCESS POTENTILLA.] Well, see you later— I mean, you have our gracious permission to depart. [*The Princes bow again and go out.* KING BINGO

suddenly appears on the verge of another Royal Rage:] Tilly! What does this mean? I'm ashamed of you! The idea—sending those poor fellows on a wild-goose chase!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Why, Papa—

KING BINGO: You know there never was a parrot with four legs in the Forest of Zimbolio, and there's no such thing as an Equatorial jackass!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Well, you didn't give me time to think of anything else. Besides, I don't want those idiotic Princes hanging around here.

KING BINGO: Listen to me, Tilly: You'll stay in here till they return from their adventures—if it takes fifty years. And don't you think you won't. You'll regret it that you ever sent those young men so far. You're a willful, obstinate girl. You certainly don't take after your Royal Father.

[*At this moment, the* TOWN CRIER *is heard outside the window, ringing his bell and shouting at the top of his voice.*]

TOWN CRIER [*off*]: Oh yes! Oh yes! Oh yes! The Princess Potentilla is being eaten by dragons! Two dragons are devouring the Princess! The Tower is guarding the dragons! Rescue the Princess! Dragons! Dragons! Dragons!

KING BINGO: What on earth is that idiot saying? I thought you told me he was to advertise the loss of your kitten?

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Yes, he's just a little bit mixed up—

[*The* TOWN CRIER *continues his ringing and shouting.*]

KING BINGO: Goodness, he must be stopped before your

mother hears him! You know how she is about dragons. For twenty years I've tried to persuade her that there are no such things, but she only screams—[*A fearful yell is heard outside.*] There she goes! I knew it! I knew it! I must try to quiet her! [*He hurries toward the door. There is another yell—louder than the first—the door is suddenly thrown open, and* QUEEN CAROLINE *rushes in. The door bangs shut after her.*]

QUEEN CAROLINE: Oh, my darling child! Are you safe? Are you sure you've not been eaten by the dragons? Where are they? Where are the terrible creatures? [*She looks under the bed.*] Oh, I'm so upset! [*She collapses in a chair.* KING BINGO *tries to quiet her: he fans her violently with his handkerchief, chafes her hands.*]

KING BINGO: There, there, my dear! Calm yourself! It's all right!

QUEEN CAROLINE [*tearfully*]: How can you say that, Bingo, with dragons all around!

KING BINGO: Dragons—pooh! There never was such an animal! It's a mistake. [QUEEN CAROLINE *bursts into a flood of tears.*] Now, Caroline, you're becoming hysterical. Do control yourself.

[*There is a tremendous hubbub outside. Men shouting: "The Princess is in danger!" "A hundred dragons are eating her alive!" "To the rescue!" The* TOWN CRIER *continues to yell and ring his bell.* KING BINGO'S *back is toward the window, so he does not see the* SWINEHERD'S *head suddenly appear above the window sill. But poor* QUEEN CAROLINE *sees it and shrieks.*]

QUEEN CAROLINE: There's a dragon! [*As* KING BINGO

turns to the window, the SWINEHERD'S *head disappears, only to reappear again the moment the King looks away.* QUEEN CAROLINE *wrings her hands.*] Oh, buttonhooks and little fishes! It was a dragon! I know I shall die! Bingo, save me! [*She drums her heels on the floor, leans back in her chair, and shuts her eyes.* KING BINGO *tries frantically to calm her.* PRINCESS POTENTILLA *carefully watches the window. Presently, the* SWINEHERD, *unobserved by the King or the Queen, jumps into the room. And, of course,* PRINCESS POTENTILLA *flies straight off into his arms.*]

SWINEHERD [*whispering*]: My Princess!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA [*whispering*]: Sh-h! You've come just in time! Don't speak! And don't be surprised at anything I say!

[*The shouting outside increases. Suddenly, furious pounding at the door.* QUEEN CAROLINE *starts up in terror.*]

QUEEN CAROLINE: Bingo! It's the dragons! This is the end! Good-by, my love! [*She collapses again, in a dead faint. The door is flung open, and in dash the three Princes with drawn swords.*]

PRINCE FLORIZEL [*out of breath*]: I was just starting out on my adventure, when I heard of your danger, Princess! So I've come to rescue you!

PRINCES PIPKIN *and* PUMPKIN [*together*]: No, *we* came to rescue you!

PRINCE FLORIZEL: I repeat: *I* have come to rescue you.

PRINCE PIPKIN: No! *I* shall have that honor!

PRINCE PUMPKIN: Shut up! It's *my* turn!

[JEAMS *comes running in.*]

JEAMS: Let me save you, miss!

KING BINGO: Here! This is enough!

[HODGSON, *the Head Gardener, rushes in with a rake and hoe.*]

HODGSON: Where be them dragons? Let me get at 'em! I'll save the lot of you!

[*A crowd of Court Ladies and Gentlemen appear. Noise, confusion.*]

KING BINGO: This is too much! [*Shouting*] Silence—everybody! The Queen is indisposed! Silence! [*Continued murmur.*] Shut UP! [*Instant quiet.*] It's all a mistake!

ALL: But we came to save the Princess!

KING BINGO [*fanning* QUEEN CAROLINE]: She doesn't need to be saved! Go home!

[PRINCESS POTENTILLA *jumps up on a chair.*]

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: My darling friends and relations: I am so happy to tell you that the dragons were beaten off by the brave Swineherd!

ALL: Hurrah for the Swineherd! Hurrah!

[*The* SWINEHERD *bows.*]

QUEEN CAROLINE [*opening her eyes; weakly*]: Have the dragons gone?

KING BINGO: Yes, my dear. And I have a shrewd suspicion they were never here.

QUEEN CAROLINE: But I saw one climbing in at the window. He had great green horns; his eyes were like red moons, and fire came from his mouth! Oh, it was too dreadful!

KING BINGO: There, there, Caroline, you have a wonderful imagination—the best in the Kingdom. . . . Now, Tilly, you'd better make up your mind to get engaged to one of these young men because you won't get out of here until you are properly engaged. That's my Royal and last Word. And no more four-legged parrots and Equatorial jackasses. These young men are quite good enough for you as they are.

QUEEN CAROLINE: Now, Tilly darling, be good.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: I have been good, dear Mother and dearest Papa.

KING BINGO: I knew you'd be reasonable, Tilly. After all, you *are* my daughter. Now, which of the three young gentlemen have you picked out? Speak up, my dear.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: I am already engaged to [*the three Princes bound forward*]—to the Swineherd, who saved me from the dragons!

[*The* SWINEHERD *looks surprised and also happy.*]

KING BINGO: Tilly! This is outrageous! You've gone out of your head!

QUEEN CAROLINE: Bingo! I shall faint! This is the first time any member of our Royal Family has been engaged to a Swineherd!

KING BINGO [*to the* SWINEHERD]: Get out of here, sirrah! You're discharged!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Father—

KING BINGO: Tilly—shut up! [*The* SWINEHERD *has not moved.*] I told you to get out! I, the King, command!

JEAMS: Let me throw him out, Sire!

HODGSON: Your Majesty, let me give 'im a taste of my hoe!

[*The hoe is raised menacingly.*]

PRINCE FLORIZEL [*to* PRINCES PIPKIN *and* PUMPKIN]: Princes, let us fight him and kill him! We could do it—if we all worked together!

QUEEN CAROLINE: It's what he deserves!

KING BINGO: Run him out!

PRINCE FLORIZEL: Run him through!

[*The men crowd round the* SWINEHERD, *and handle him so roughly that his smock is torn open all down the front. And behold, instead of being dressed in the rags of a mere Swineherd, he is clad in a Prince's dazzlingly beautiful costume. The crowd falls back in amazement.*]

KING BINGO: Well, what are you waiting for? Run him out!

JEAMS: I think there has been some mistake, Sire.

SWINEHERD [*taking off his smock*]: I really think there has, Your Majesty.

KING BINGO: Who are you, sir?

QUEEN CAROLINE: Bingo, I must say he looks respectable enough now.

PRINCESS POTENTILLA [*clasping her hands*]: Oh, wonderful, wonderful!

KING BINGO: Tilly, I'll attend to this. [*To the* SWINEHERD] What's your name?

SWINEHERD: I am Prince Charming—at your service. [*He kneels before* KING BINGO.]

KING BINGO: Not *the* Prince Charming?

PRINCE CHARMING: The only one I know—Heir Apparent to the Seven Kingdoms of Aldebaran and—

KING BINGO: I don't believe it!

PRINCE CHARMING: It's true, Your Majesty.

KING BINGO: Let me look you over. Turn around. [PRINCE CHARMING *turns several times.* KING BINGO *examines him minutely.*] 'Pon my soul! It *is* true! You're one and the same!

QUEEN CAROLINE: Of course he is, Bingo.

KING BINGO: But—but how did it all come about?

PRINCE CHARMING: It's very simple, Your Majesty. I took service as your Swineherd because I wanted to test your daughter's love—

KING BINGO: You mean Tilly?

QUEEN CAROLINE: Don't be absurd, Bingo. You know she's the only daughter you have. Proceed, *dear* Swine—er—Prince Charming!

PRINCE CHARMING: I wanted to learn, Your Majesty, whether the Princess Potentilla, whom I have always secretly admired, would love me alone, without my wealth and position. I am satisfied. She does love me. Now, with your permission, we shall be married with all the pomp and ceremony such an occasion demands.

KING BINGO [*his arm on* PRINCE CHARMING's *shoulder*]: Well, well, my dear boy, I'm delighted! But I'm not surprised! I really knew all along that you had Royal Blood in your veins! You can't deceive me, my boy—blood will tell!

PRINCE CHARMING: Then I have your consent to marry your daughter?

KING BINGO: Certainly, my boy—delighted! Take her—she's driving me crazy!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Papa! How can you be so horrid!

QUEEN CAROLINE: Tilly, dear, I simply must meet your young man!

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Oh, pardon me! This is Prince Charming—my Mother!

QUEEN CAROLINE: How de do?

PRINCE CHARMING: Charmed—Mother! [*He kisses her hand.*]

QUEEN CAROLINE [*in a whisper to* KING BINGO]: What nice manners!

KING BINGO [*to* PRINCE CHARMING]: How did you ever get in here, my boy?

PRINCE CHARMING: On the wings of—

PRINCESS POTENTILLA: Oh, darling! You know you climbed up the drain pipe!

QUEEN CAROLINE: Well, however it was, it sounds very dangerous. You might have broken your neck. Do pray use the front door next time.

PRINCE CHARMING: It shall be as you wish, Madam.

QUEEN CAROLINE: Tilly, come to Mother. You always were a clever little thing. To think that you've managed to get the bravest and richest Prince in all the world—without any help from your Father or me! It's incredible!

KING BINGO: On the contrary, I started and encouraged the whole affair.

[PRINCES FLORIZEL, PIPKIN, *and* PUMPKIN *are looking very blue.* PRINCES PIPKIN *and* PUMPKIN *have been busy wiping the tears out of each other's eyes. Finally,* PRINCE FLORIZEL *summons up enough courage to speak.*]

PRINCE FLORIZEL: We beg leave to retire, Sire.

KING BINGO: That's one of the best things you do. Sorry you can't stay, boys.

PRINCES FLORIZEL, PIPKIN, *and* PUMPKIN [*together, as they bow*] Sire! Madam! Princess! [*They raise their heads very high, ignore* PRINCE CHARMING, *and march out.*]

HODGSON: Three cheers for the 'andsome young couple!

ALL: Hip-hip-hurrah! Hip-hip-hurrah! Hip-hip-hurrah!

KING BINGO: And now, let us all wish good luck and happiness to our Prince and noble Princess!

ALL [*singing*]:

Good luck and happiness
To our Prince and noble Princess!

[KING BINGO, QUEEN CAROLINE, JEAMS, HODGSON, *and all the Court Ladies and Gentlemen join hands, and dance round and round* PRINCE CHARMING *and* PRINCESS POTENTILLA *until they become quite dizzy and*

THE CURTAIN FALLS

NOTES FOR THE PRODUCER

ACTING

It is essential that this play should be done in a spirit of rollicking comedy. The SWINEHERD is the only person in the entire play who behaves consistently in a dignified manner. With the rest of the characters, the strain of trying to be dignified proves too much for them after a few moments, and they find themselves using colloquialisms and acting like people in very ordinary walks of life. These changes should be stressed, for they are important to the characterization.

The Princess and the Swineherd may be given by either children or adults, or with a mixed cast. In the event of a performance by adults, it should be borne in mind that the success of the play is wholly dependent on the spirit of childish spontaneity and fun which is manifested.

MUSIC

As stated in the note on page 16, the music for the chorus at the end of Act I and Act III, and also for the ROYAL AUDITORS and the end of Act II, will be found on the last pages of this volume. For the dance on page 19 Paderewski's *Minuet* or Beethoven's *Minuet in G* may be used. For the SHEPHERDS' dance, at the opening of Act II,

Green Sleeves would be effective, or indeed any of the very rhythmic and melodious English folk tunes.

The music may be played by a small orchestra, or a violin and piano, or merely a piano.

COSTUMES

Almost any period costumes may be used, but the easiest to make and also the most effective are full skirts with tight, pointed bodices and short puffed sleeves for the women or girls, and knee breeches and cutaway satin coats for the men or boys. If this style is adopted, the full skirts should almost touch the ground and should look very much like hoop skirts. The bodices can be cut low or worn with white fichus. These costumes are very inexpensive. For the court scenes a most gay and lovely color effect can be had by using the flowered cotton challis, commonly sold for covering quilts. Every imaginable color and design is to be found in this material, and though when seen individually the color and design may appear somewhat crude, yet when in a group with the different patterns and colors, they are quite charming.

King Bingo is very untidy, and none of his clothes seem to fit him. In Act I he wears white satin breeches—none too clean and undone at the knee—and a sadly crumpled blue satin, cutaway coat, and a long cloak of crimson, trimmed with gold braid. His royal crown looks heavy and cumbersome, but it is probably made of cardboard.

Queen Caroline is resplendent in a dress of gray satin.

It is very full, and round the bottom are several flounces of lavender and blue. She wears a high lace collar, like Mary, Queen of Scots. When there is no company, she dons a pink apron and a dust cap.

Princess Potentilla looks like a snowflake. Her dress is pure white, and very fluffy and flouncy. Her hair is tied with two pink bows.

The Swineherd first appears in a long green smock, dark blue trousers, and a dilapidated straw hat. At the end of Act III this costume is removed, and underneath is a handsome white and gold suit of the conventional "prince" design.

Prince Florizel is dressed in apple-green breeches, and a white coat and jabot.

Prince Pipkin is in yellow breeches, a white coat and jabot.

Prince Pumpkin wears white breeches, a cherry-colored coat, and also a white jabot.

The Lord Chamberlain is dressed in yellow and black: bright yellow hose and breeches, black coat and shoes. Slung from his shoulders is a short cloak of deep yellow. He carries a tall, gold-topped stick.

Jeams wears a black coat, and black knee breeches and hose. His vest has orange and black stripes. His neck is dignified with a high stock collar—no frills or lace.

Hodgson is dressed in a maroon-colored smock and brown trousers.

Sir John Hithard wears a many-patterned dressing gown over an ordinary gymnasium suit. His dark whiskers and enormous muscles are very intimidating. He has on a

long-sleeved undershirt, properly padded with cotton biceps and shoulder muscles.

The First and Second Sentries are dressed alike in brilliant red trousers with black stripes, and tight-fitting red coats. Their helmets are dull black, conical in shape, but rounded instead of pointed at the top. Their guns are very short and really do not look capable of shooting a flea.

The Musician is poorly dressed in black with torn lace at his cuffs and neck.

The Town Crier wears a crimson blouse trimmed with black; a wide black belt with a huge buckle; black breeches and shoes, and red stockings. He carries a large dinner bell wherever he goes.

The Messenger is dressed in white trousers with a black belt and a tight blue tunic. There are plenty of brass buttons down his front. He wears a bell boy's cap of red with a white quill stuck jauntily on one side.

The Royal Auditors are dressed alike in black and white. Each wears a crimson feather in his black hat.

Jane, the Courtiers, and the Court Ladies are all dressed in costumes of vivid colors and of the design described in the first paragraph of these costume notes.

The Shepherds all wear light blue smocks, gray trousers, and floppy straw hats.

SCENERY

The scenery for this play should be of the simplest kind. There are in reality only two sets; the difference between Act I and Act III being merely the substitution of a win-

dow for an archway and the illusion of height resulting from the use of a strip of blue canvas as a backing for the window, and perhaps the addition of a balcony.

If desired, the garden seen through the archway in Act I may be made by bunching together some real foliage about six feet behind the arch.

In Act II, if a plain sky cloth (cyclorama) is not available, any wood set may be used.

THE PIGS

The SWINEHERD, in Act II, brings in a large wicker basket, over the rim of which may be seen the heads of half a dozen small pigs. These heads are easily made by doubling some pink muslin and drawing the profile of a pig's head about three times as large as the size desired in the finished pig. This should be done to allow for the cotton batting with which the head is to be stuffed. Cut along the outline and sew up, leaving the material open at the neck. There is no need for a body, since only the heads are seen by the audience. The pink muslin should be left long enough to be attached to the basket when the pig is completed, in order to keep him in position.

The upturned snouts are perhaps slightly difficult to make, but a great deal of satisfactory modeling can be done when the stuffing is being put in. The nostrils and eyes may be drawn with black Crayola.

As we have already suggested in the business of the play, a realistic effect of the squealing and grunting of pigs may be got by having those people on the stage who are not

immediately concerned with the action and dialogue, turn their backs on the audience, and make appropriate noises —with their mouths shut.

THE MAGIC COOKING POT

This is an ordinary wooden chopping bowl, about twelve inches in circumference and seven inches high, in which a small music box is hidden.

LIGHTING

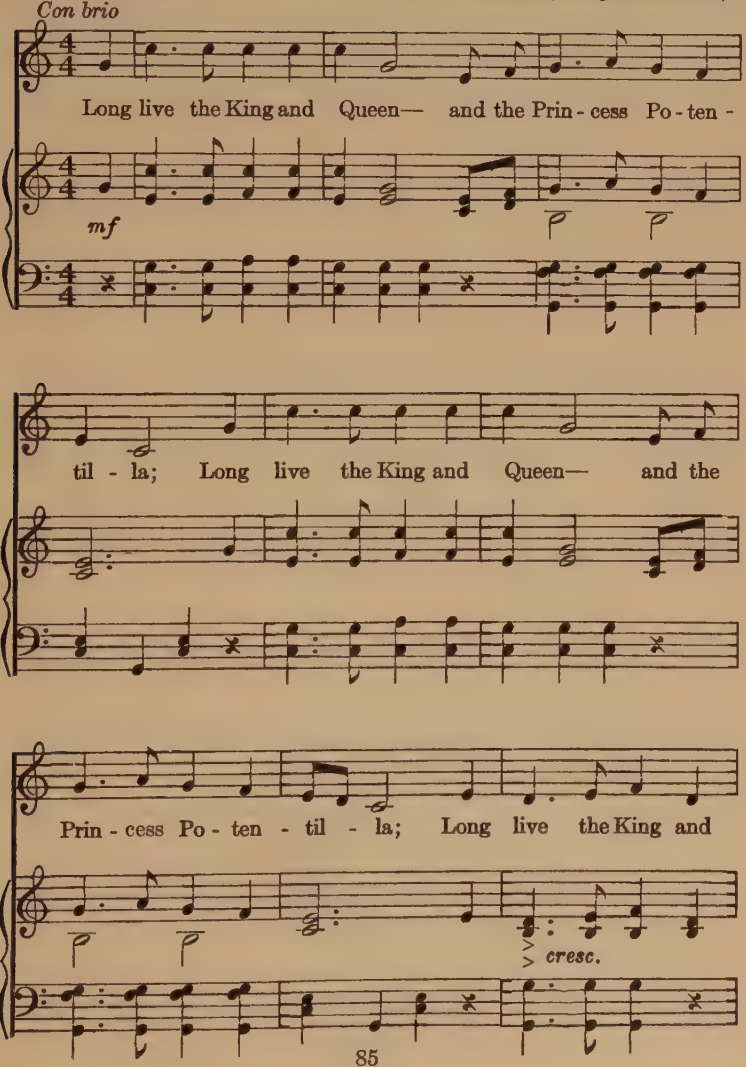
Elaborate lighting effects are not necessary in this play. The illumination is left to the discretion of the director.

LONG LIVE THE KING AND QUEEN

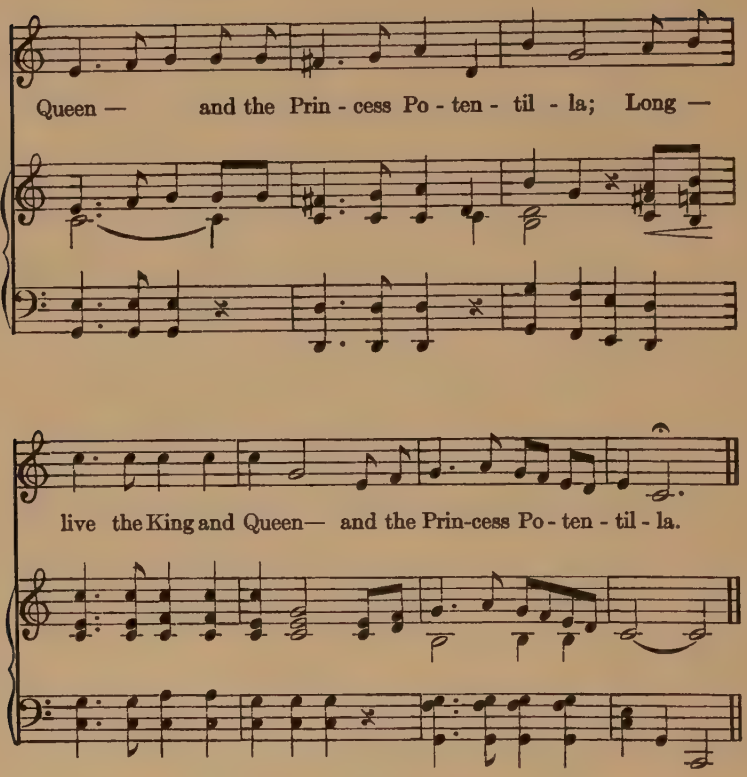
(Good Luck and Happiness)

Act I: page 29
Act III: page 74

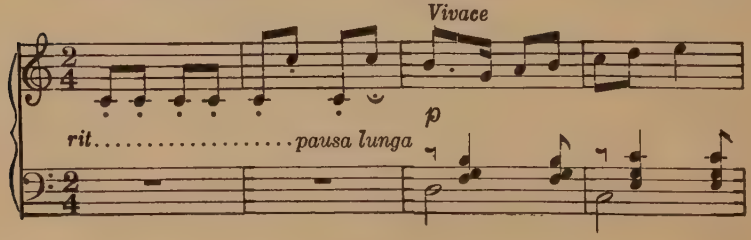
(At the end of the play, sing "Good Luck and Happiness" instead of the present verse.)


Con brio
Long live the King and Queen— and the Prin - cess Po - ten -
mf
til - la; Long live the King and Queen— and the
Prin - cess Po - ten - til - la; Long live the King and
cresc.

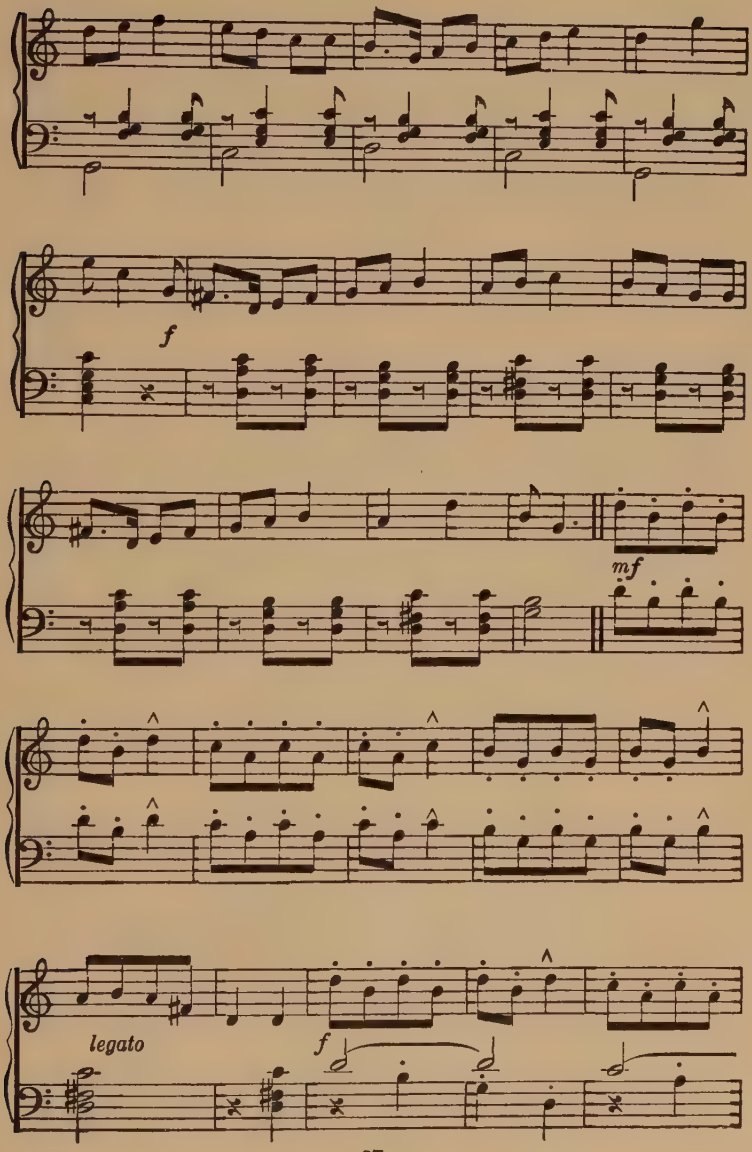
Long Live the King and Queen



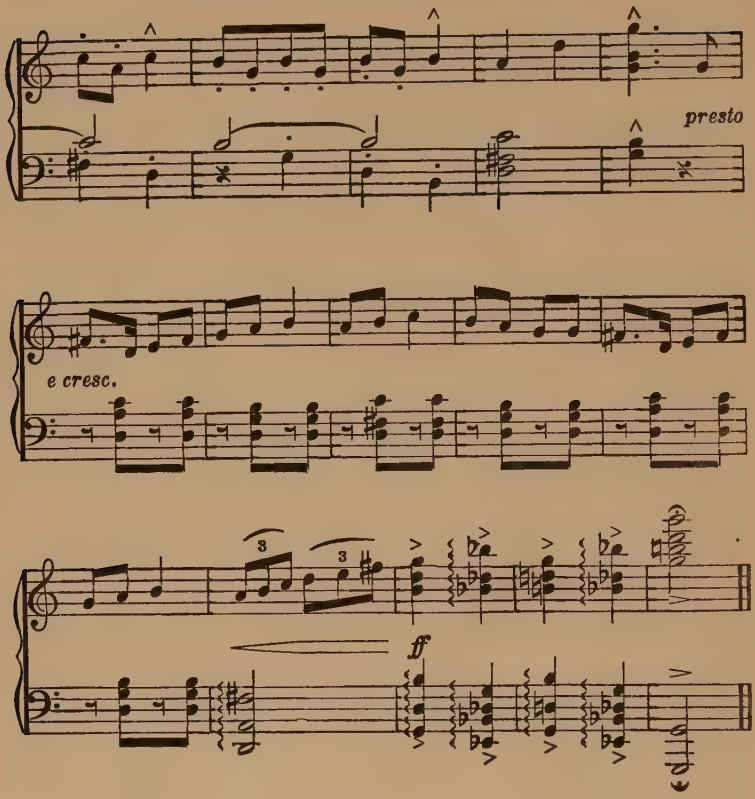
(At the end of Act I, the Lord Chamberlain tiptoes to the archway, then turns to the crowd and says in a loud whisper: "All right they're gone!" *They all join hands and dance. At the end of the play, the crowd, including Prince Charming and the Royal Family, dance in a similar manner.)*



Long Live the King and Queen



Long Live the King and Queen

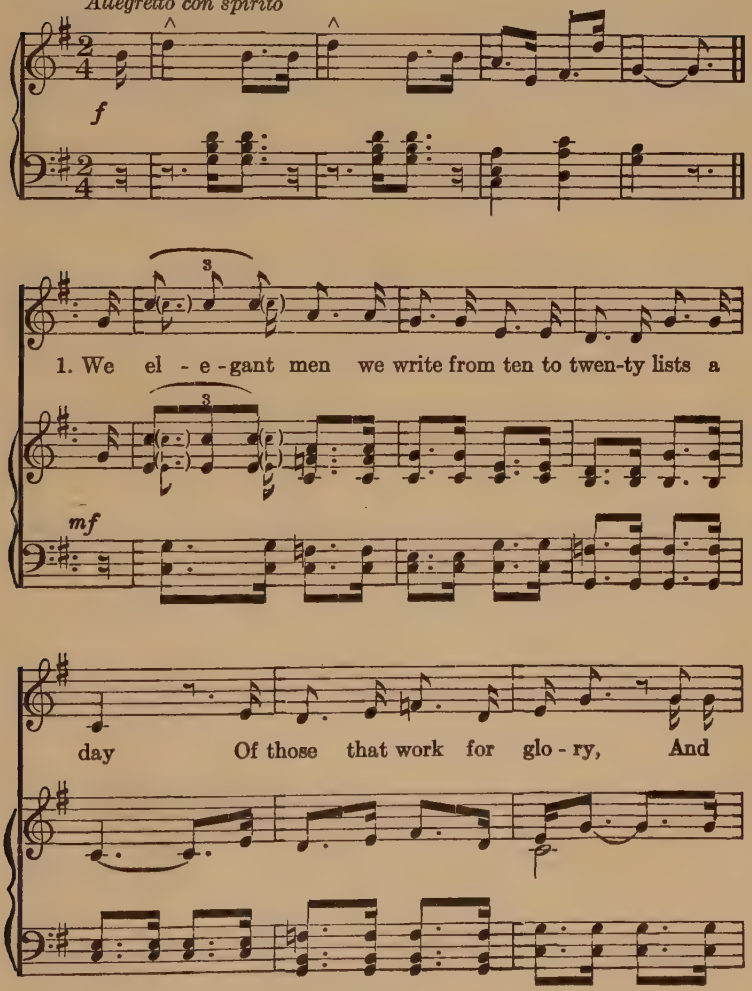


THE ROYAL AUDITORS

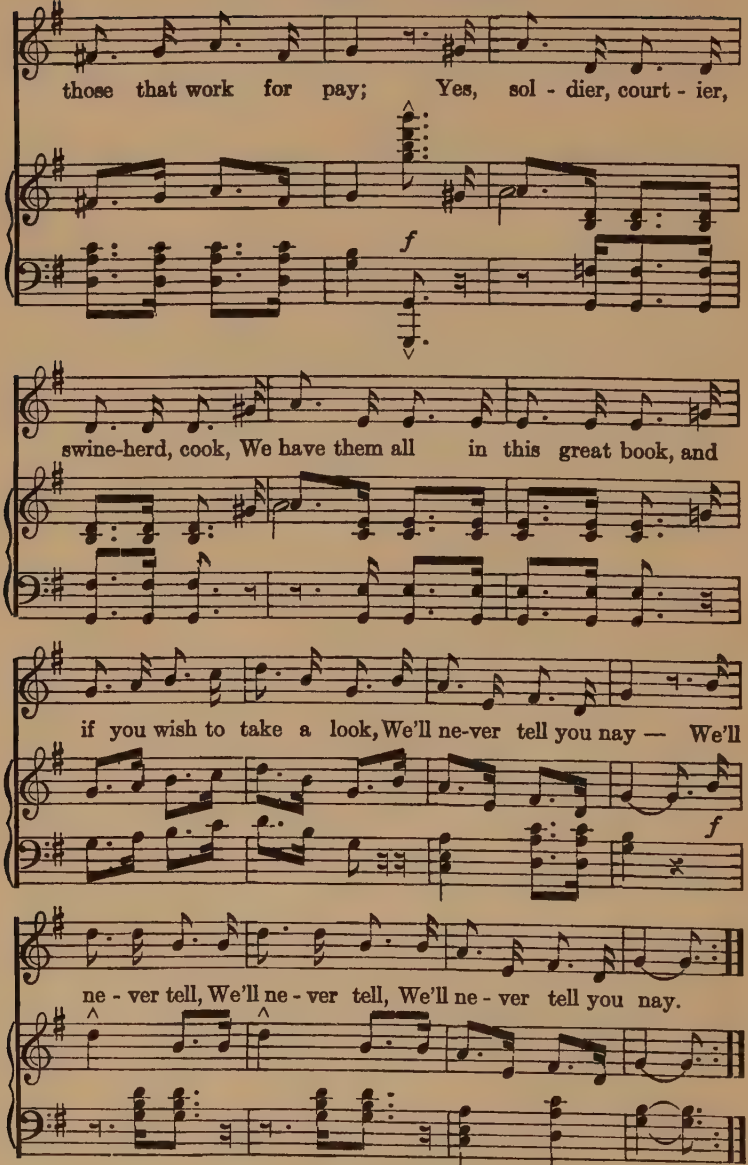
Act II: page 35

(The Royal Auditors come dancing in.)

Allegretto con spirito

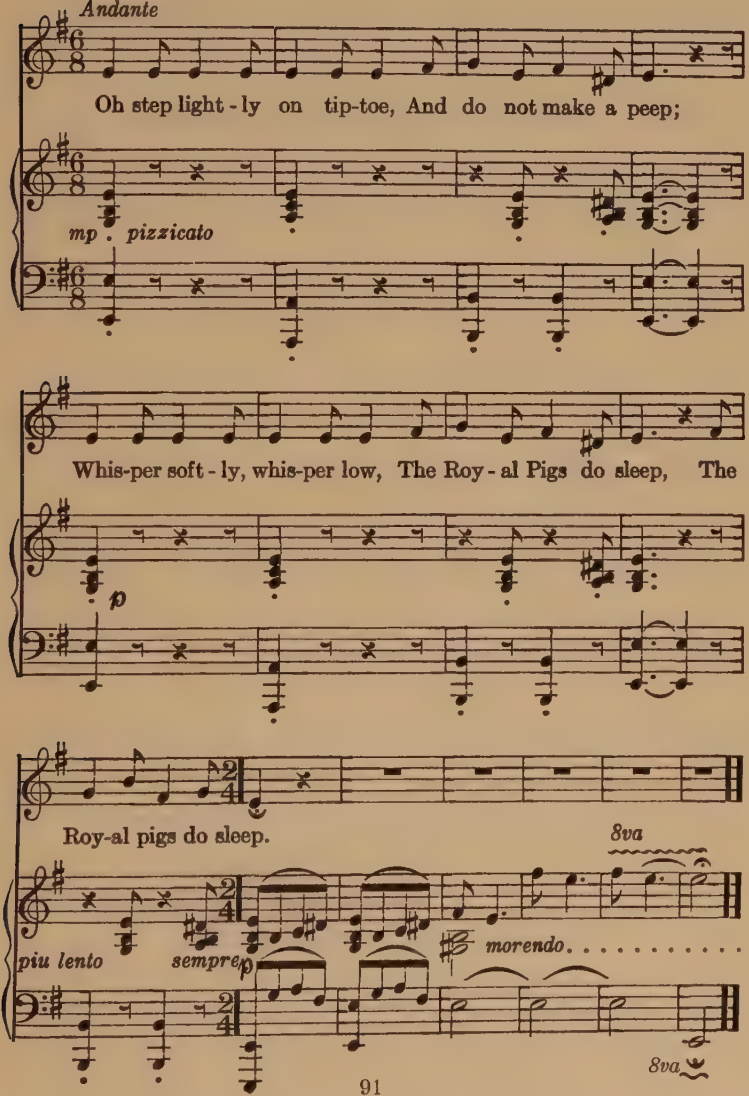


The Royal Auditors


those that work for pay; Yes, sol - dier, court - ier,
f
swine-herd, cook, We have them all in this great book, and
if you wish to take a look, We'll ne-ver tell you nay — We'll
f
ne - ver tell, We'll ne - ver tell, We'll ne - ver tell you nay.

90 (*Sing three more verses, as in the play.*)

OH, STEP LIGHTLY

Act II: page 47

(All the people on the stage tiptoe off in time with the music, singing softy as they go.)